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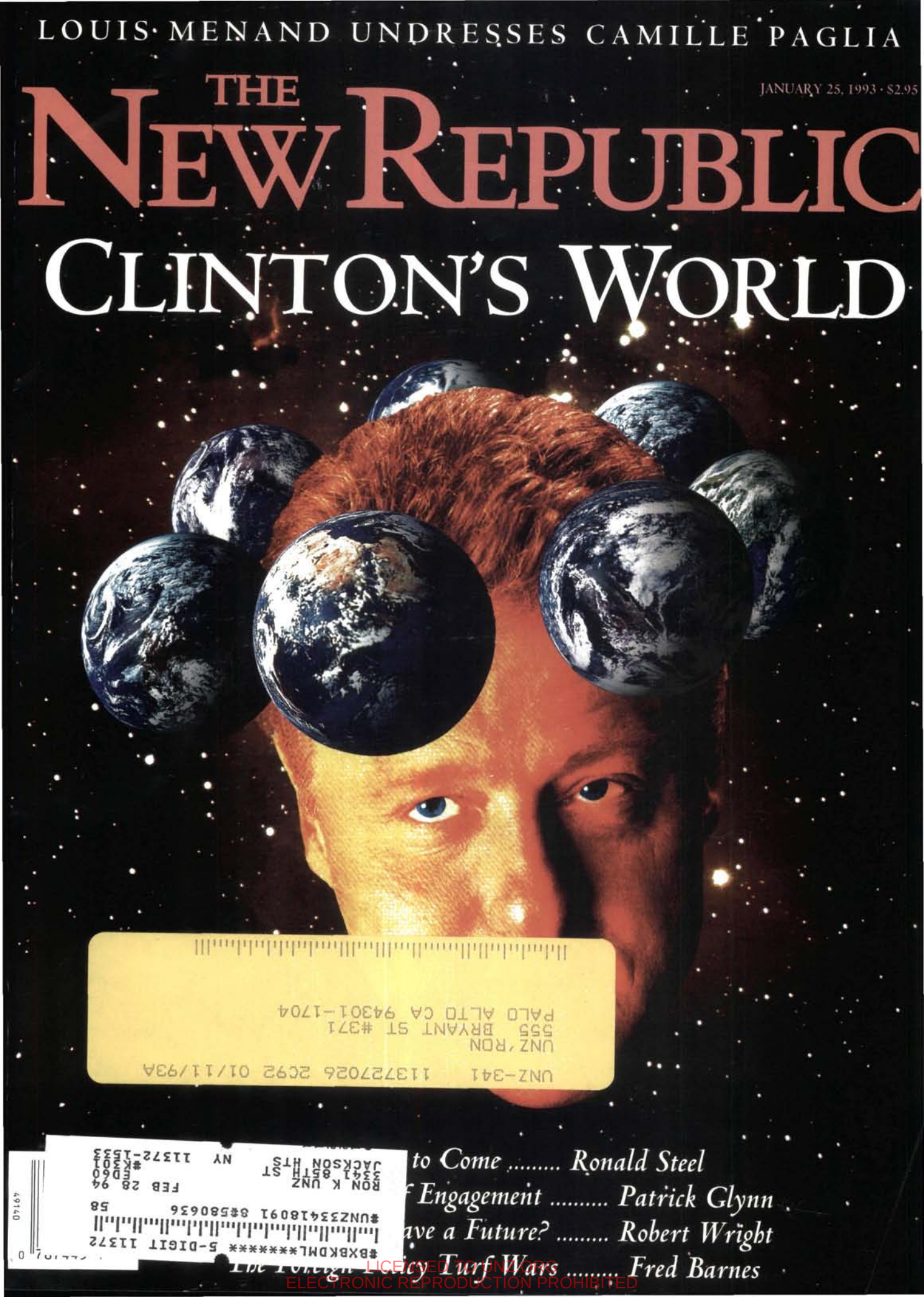

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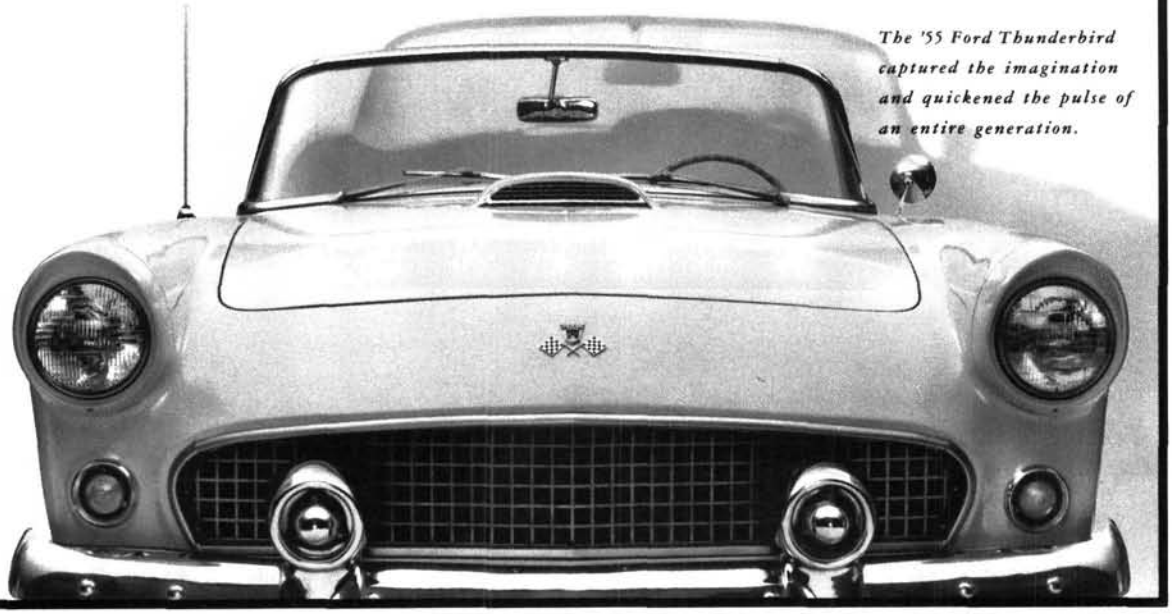

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A Weekly Journal of Opinion

JANUARY 25, 1993

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CORRESPONDENCE

Pinching pennies

To the editors:

The attention you direct to Bob Packwood's peccadilloes is misplaced ("Resign, Bob Packwood," December 21). Not that I want to defend the man. He is a boor and a minor menace. I love his plea: not guilty because drunk. "I didn't do it, it was demon rum." I don't want originality from a politician, and I don't expect dignity. I'm grateful to the senator for meeting my wish and expectation, and he has my best wishes for the future: may his mental health improve in his hiding place in the Betty Ford Center or wherever he may be headed.

However, is his chasing women around the conference table so deleterious to the commonweal as to merit attention in your lead editorial? Congressmen have more important failings than a tendency to oppress their staffs. I'd like to see an editorial, for example, on Fernand St. Germain, no doubt now living in luxurious retirement on past savings and loan political "contributions," perhaps the single most expensive retirement package in American history. Or how about an editorial on the public money Senator Robert Byrd has thrown and is throwing at West Virginia?

If St. Germain and Byrd—cited as egregious but typical examples—had spent more time pinching bottoms and less time on public business, the deficit today would be smaller by many billions and the federal government less corrupt than it is.

JOHN C. STALNAKER
Cincinnati, Ohio

Focusing on the record

To the editors:

Jacob Weisberg's attack ("Nowhere Man," December 14) compels me to respond. He is lazy in his research and betrays a simplistic understanding of policy-making. His article disgraces the reputation for high-minded commentary earned by THE NEW REPUBLIC in a previous generation.

He writes: "A reputation for integrity can disguise a hollowness within, a lack of content.... Hamilton is notably deficient in the forcefulness and vision that the chief American architect of the post-cold war world ought to possess."

I would challenge Weisberg to find a member of Congress who has worked harder to spell out a Democratic foreign policy. For more than a decade, I have written monthly newsletters on the tough foreign policy issues of the day. They have been widely published. I speak at least weekly—often daily—on foreign policy issues large and small. Before the National Press Club and the Los Angeles World Affairs Council last year, I outlined a post-Gulf war policy and post-cold war policy for the United States. In *Foreign Affairs* magazine this summer, I wrote in detail on what I believe the foreign policy of a Democratic administration should be. Weisberg may disagree with my views—and that is fine. But his harshly critical article shows little familiarity with the content of my work.

He misrepresents my votes against military aid to the Nicaraguan contras and rebels in Angola as "opposition and outrage in terms of process." He simply ignores the record. I spoke out forcefully against the substance of these policies. Moreover, Weisberg fails to appreciate the importance of my opposition to the process: foreign policy made and carried out in secret, bypassing Congress and the system of checks and balances, is a prescription for failure. Does Weisberg believe the Iran-contra affair shows the better way to make foreign policy?

His criticism of my chairmanship of the House Intelligence (1984-86) and Iran-contra (1987) Committees is fatuous. We all know today that North, McFarlane and Poindexter were liars, but Congress did not know—and could not know—that at the time. Weisberg neglects to mention that Congress, in committees that I chaired, uncovered most of the misconduct that he blames it for missing. Getting the facts required the testimony of key figures, and for this reason the House Committee voted 12-3 to grant North immunity. Other votes on immunity were unanimous. It is wonderful hindsight to blame the Iran-contra committees for a precedent-setting 2-1 Appeals Court ruling (two Reagan Court appointees, versus one Carter appointee), reversing North's and Poindexter's conviction three and four years after the committee hearings.

He misrepresents my position on Syria. In 1991 I favored continuing existing export controls with Syria—neither strengthening nor weakening them. I supported naming in legislation all countries to which such sanctions would apply—or naming none of them. Weisberg's position would have led to less stringent sanctions against Iran than against Syria.

Weisberg knowingly distorts my views on the Baltic states. He quotes a statement from me prior to the Soviet crackdown and leaves the reader with the impression that it took place after. I co-

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sponsored a resolution condemning the Soviet use of force in the Baltic states, and spoke out on the House floor. Weisberg can look it up—pages H624-625, *Congressional Record,* January 22, 1991.

Weisberg chastises my vote against the Persian Gulf war. It is flawed logic to assert that a strategy of diplomacy, sanctions and military deployments to expel Iraq from Kuwait failed—because we changed strategies and went to war. Nor can we say the war was a great success: Saddam is still in power, Iraqi compliance with U.N. resolutions is minimal, arms sales to the region are accelerating and Iran has emerged with greater influence.

I did not "stall" sanctions legislation against Iraq. Such legislation could not have passed in the House in early 1990 over administration opposition. I voted in support of Iraqi sanctions legislation that was reported out of the Foreign Affairs Committee on August 1—when no member of the committee realized that an invasion of Kuwait was only hours away.

Weisberg distorts my views on the promotion of democracy. I have urged funding for local government and public administration programs in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. I have pressed the State Department on democracy in the Middle East.

Weisberg also misrepresents my views on the National Endowment for Democracy. I voted in 1991 to cut NED funding—as did a majority of House Democrats—largely because a General Accounting Office report criticized NED for lax financial practices. That amendment was defeated, but since then NED has responded constructively to GAO concerns. In recent months, I have encouraged NED to expand its work in the Middle East and former Yugoslavia.

Finally, I want to point out that the paintings in my office, which Weisberg calls "soft-focus K-Mart paintings," were done by my wife, Nancy Hamilton. His condescension and inaccuracy on this single point characterize his arrogance and sloppiness throughout. THE NEW REPUBLIC can do much better.

LEE H. HAMILTON
U.S. House of Representatives
Chairman, Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East
Washington, D.C.

Articles of faith

To the editors:

It was clear during the past year and a half that there was a "slight" bias toward Bill Clinton in your magazine. The number of flattering articles about the Clintons and Gores grew as we approached Election Day. And the tone of the articles became sickeningly sweet. I checked the masthead each issue I received to see if you had become "A Weekly Journal of Clinton Opinion."

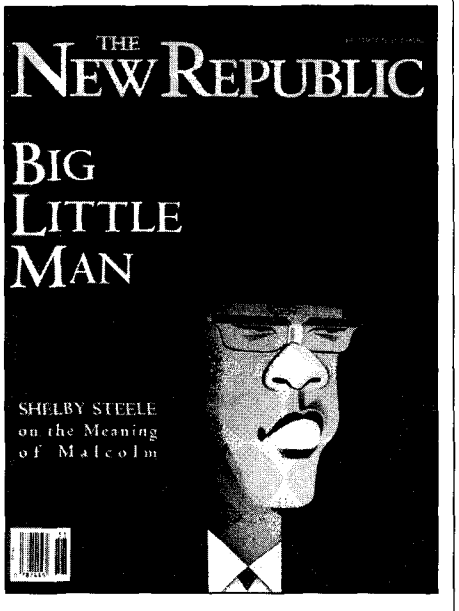
My worst fears have now been founded. Clinton has won and TNR seems to have lost its bite. I suggest that the entire editorial staff resign for the duration of the Clinton administration, and that Mr. and Mrs. Peretz put the magazine into a blind trust.

LAWRENCE ROSENSHEIN
Upper Montclair, New Jersey

Sacred service

To the editors:

In "Muzzled" (November 9) Stephen Rodrick implies that Secret Service



agents assigned to protect President George Bush and Vice President Dan Quayle have been involved in overt political activities. I can tell you that this is not the case, and that any activity of that nature by Secret Service employees is not tolerated. When we get reports from any source of such alleged behavior by our employees, we look into it very thoroughly. During a presidential campaign year, as you might expect, we have had allegations similar to the ones Rodrick referred to made against us, and all have proved to be unfounded. As we are involved in providing security for the president and vice president-elect, as well as Bush and Quayle, the allegations have come from all political sides.

We have a very sensitive and difficult job in protecting the candidates running for our nation's highest office. We have a unique cadre of agents and support personnel who perform this task, with much personal sacrifice. They work long hours, travel many miles, and are away from home an inordinate amount of time. There is no other enforcement agency at any level of government that asks so much of its personnel, who when required, put their life on the line for those we are mandated to protect.

Rodrick did not bother to contact our agency before he ran this article, which I find very unprofessional, and which left him uninformed about what the Secret Service really does.

DON A. EDWARDS
Department of the Treasury
United States Secret Service
Washington, D.C.

Bad move

To the editors:

Are you now going to add a "Cheap Shot of the Week" to your Notebook column? Or was your hatchet job on Mike Lewan (December 14) an anomaly? Either way, you are guilty of one-sided reporting.

Mike Lewan may be taking a position with Black, Manafort, Stone and Kelly, but I hardly think that after working nearly sixteen years on Capitol Hill for Joe Lieberman and Steve Solarz it is accurate to characterize his leaving as "tak[ing] the money and run[ning]."

In the interest of putting some balance in your brief epithet of Lewan, you should have contacted those of us who know and work with him. (I have worked for him for nearly four years.) You would have gotten a very different picture than the one you portrayed to your readers. Lewan is honest, possesses sound political judgment and will in no way impugn the reputation of Joe Lieberman or Congress in his new job.

I find it ironic that after your comments on Lewan, you sing the praises of one of your own, Sidney Blumenthal, who is leaving for *The New Yorker.* I agree that the readers of TNR will miss Blumenthal. He's a very insightful journalist. But why sing his praises because he has decided to move on to other endeavors and condemn Lewan's desire to do the same?

I suggest that TNR get an ombudsman, or at least get both sides of a story before making a gratuitous attack on an individual.

WILLIAM C. DANVERS
Arlington, Virginia

The editors welcome correspondence from readers. Letters should include the writer's full name, address, and telephone number; be typed double-spaced; and be held to under 200 words. Letters may be edited for space. Please address letters to: Correspondence, TNR, 1220 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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FROM WASHINGTON

Fortysomething

Lots of fortyish lawyers I know (and I know lots) are wondering, "Why aren't I about to become attorney general?" Many were prepared to have to fret eventually about not becoming attorney general, but eventually still seemed a ways off until Bill Clinton picked Zoe Baird, age 40, as his attorney general-designate. (William Barr, the current attorney general, was 40 when George Bush appointed him a couple of years ago, but he's such an apparatchik that nobody noticed or cared.)

This generational panic attack—It's our turn, and where am I?—is all the more severe because the moment has arrived with unexpected swiftness. Just a few months ago, it seemed almost certain that the president would be a man in his 70s for at least the next four years, with aides and cronies almost as, er, mature. It's shocking enough to find yourself in your 40s. The added shock of finding that suddenly the people running the country are also in their 40s is doubly cruel.

The moment of truth also comes with another surprise: national leadership is apparently going to involve repeated decisions about whether to send younger Americans off to risk their lives in war. Only in the last year has it become clear that the end of the cold war will probably introduce a new era of military activism. Formerly dormant nationalisms create new dangers; the nuclear stand-down creates new opportunities. Maybe we shouldn't be surprised, but we are.

When and how to use American force will be the foreign policy debate of the next four years. (Much of this issue of TNR is devoted to it.) But one question needs to be cleared up, if possible, in advance. Most of the fortysomething generation has never fought in a war. Many took active steps to avoid fighting in Vietnam. Does that foreclose them from ordering a younger generation into battle—especially to battles that seem "optional" compared with World War II and the cold war?

This question arose, in a muddy way, during the recent election campaign. It will arise much more painfully every time the Clinton administration attempts to use American force to save foreign lives or to promote democracy abroad, as Clinton seems intent to have the option of doing.

Alan Tonelson, the thirtysomething research director of a Washington think tank, wrote recently in *The Washington Post*, in opposition to the Somalia mission: "There is ... something unseemly about politicians launching moral crusades and pundits cheering them on knowing that they and their loved ones will remain safely on the sidelines. And for Vietnam-era doves to join in is almost unforgivable."

Measuring your life against your professed beliefs, and vice versa, is always a good exercise. Especially when the issue is sending others off to risk their lives. Is the Clinton generation prevented by its own history from making such a decision? Is the debate over the use of American force in the post-cold war world short-circuited from the start?

The mere fact that one opposed the war in Vietnam does not imply logically that one must oppose other uses of American force. You can say "no" to Vietnam and "yes" to Somalia, just as there are those—cold war conservatives who now style themselves "realists"—who say "yes" to Vietnam and "no" to Somalia. (See the winter issue of the *National Interest* for a bracing set of essays from this point of view.) It is undeniably ironic that former doves now sound like hawks, and equally ironic that former hawks now sound like doves. But irony is not logic.

When it comes to war, middle-aged people make the decisions and young people do the fighting. That's how it works, unfortunately. The argument that therefore the decision-makers have no right to commit American force unless national security is fundamentally at stake "proves too much," as the lawyers say.

Just as there will be disagreements about whether this or that "merely" humanitarian enterprise is worth the risk, there will be disagreements about when America's national security is truly at stake. The Vietnam debate was largely such a disagreement. Even World War II had its challengers on these grounds. Perhaps no one should be required to fight a war he or she doesn't personally believe in. (Many Vietnam dissenters felt this way.) Short of that, the one reason for reluctance to fight seems as good as the other.

Although proponents of a military draft have had the moral upper hand in recent years, it's worth noting the advantages of a volunteer army in this regard. Volunteer soldiers certainly haven't volunteered to be killed, and decision-makers have no right to put them at risk promiscuously. But they have volunteered to be trained for a mission, and it's likely that many of them are pleased with the risk-to-moral-satisfaction ratio of using their skills in an enterprise like the rescue of Somalia, compared with other ways they might be expected to serve.

More than 90 percent of the Vietnam generation never saw war. In this, of course, it is no different from the thirtysomethings and twentysomethings who follow, almost 100 percent of whom have never seen war. When their turn to lead comes, they will not have faced either the challenge of the World War II generation—Will you risk your life for your country in an undeniably worthy cause?—or the challenge of the Vietnam generation—What do you do when your country is engaged in a cause you find morally repugnant?

Bill Clinton is not one of those who supported the Vietnam War—or failed to oppose it—and yet avoided service. Unless we are to have wars simply to prepare future generations of leaders to have wars, leaders without the experience of war will be our problematic but happy fate.

Meanwhile, those Republican college kids who taunted Bill Clinton as a "draft dodger" during the campaign: How many of them have enlisted, even in the peacetime army? Oh well, maybe we can put that argument off for a generation.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

COMING NEXT WEEK:

SPECIAL INAUGURAL ISSUE

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

JANUARY 25, 1993

THE CRYING GAME

Last month at the Little Rock economic summit, a Clinton Cabinet appointee discounted the idea of "a supposed choice between deficit reduction and public investment." He explained, "It's a little bit like that false choice between jobs or the environment." Yes, the two cases do have something in common: he's wrong about both. In these two arenas, as in most, Bill Clinton faces real, hard choices.

In fairness, there is one sense in which these choices may indeed be false—a very, very long-run sense. A neglected environment does *eventually* hurt the economy. Air and water become foul, people grow sick and disgusted, absenteeism and health care costs rise, productivity plummets, recession ensues. But preventive medicine costs money. Smokestack scrubbers aren't free. Of course, the scrubber manufacturer may do well—and may, indeed, be part of a globally growing industry, so that years later environmental policy turns out to have been industrial policy. Still, the net short-run effect is a loss in economic efficiency, which ultimately means a loss of jobs.

There are *some* short-run compatibilities between environment and economy, but they're not of the sort the government needs to worry much about. Efficient energy use, for example, is something private companies pursue naturally, via basic economic incentives. Of course, it's fine for the government to point out places where obtuse companies can pick up more slack. But the primary basis for government intrusion in environmental affairs is that taking up this sort of slack isn't nearly enough. The economic incentives of the market do not encourage individuals, and individual companies, to worry about the environment as much as it needs to be worried about for the sake of all individuals and companies. In other words, there's a "free rider" problem. For any one actor, the rationally selfish thing is to freeload—keep polluting, while sharing equally in the benefits of everyone else's costly restraint.

Addressing free rider problems is the essence of environmental policy. It is the logic behind, say, a tax on gasoline and other fossil fuels; the tax adjusts individual incentives, bringing them into line with the public interest. Such taxes, though justified, and though having the added virtue of deficit reduction, are—let's be frank—a short-run drag on the economy.

With public investment—in bridges, airports and schools—the dynamic is roughly the same. If investment is lacking, the budget deficit may grow—eventually. Poorly educated kids become bad workers, if not criminals. Economic output, and thus tax revenues, drop, even as policing and other government costs grow. Corroding roads and subways can have the same cancerous effect on output. Still, in the short run, infrastructure investment raises the deficit.

That the two "false choices" are false in the long run—that intelligent investment and environmental regulation can *eventually* translate into economic success—is one of several good reasons to support Clinton's policies: infrastructure investment (of *some* kinds, at least) and stringent environmental regulation. But unless we think short term, both policies can go awry. Environmental policy-makers must be cognizant of the economic drag they exert. And infrastructure spending must be offset elsewhere, through revenue gains or spending cuts.

Indeed, in the absence of deficit control, Clinton's infrastructure policy is bound to fail in the broadest sense. The deficit raises long-term interest rates, or at least keeps them from dropping. And high rates hamper infrastructure growth in both the private and public sectors. Companies can't borrow money to upgrade, say, communications lines, and local governments can't float the bonds that build roads. (Environmental policy suffers, too. Investment in cleaner or more efficient energy technology, for example, becomes prohibitive.) Thus one of the soundest policies for rebuilding infrastructure—both public and private—is to close the deficit. This isn't a *sufficient* policy, but it's necessary.

The trouble is that closing the deficit is painful. And Bill Clinton's tolerance for bitter medicine remains unproven, though some of his recent comments (about a gas tax, for example) are heartening. George Bush failed to demonstrate such a tolerance four years ago. That's why he's out of a job. •

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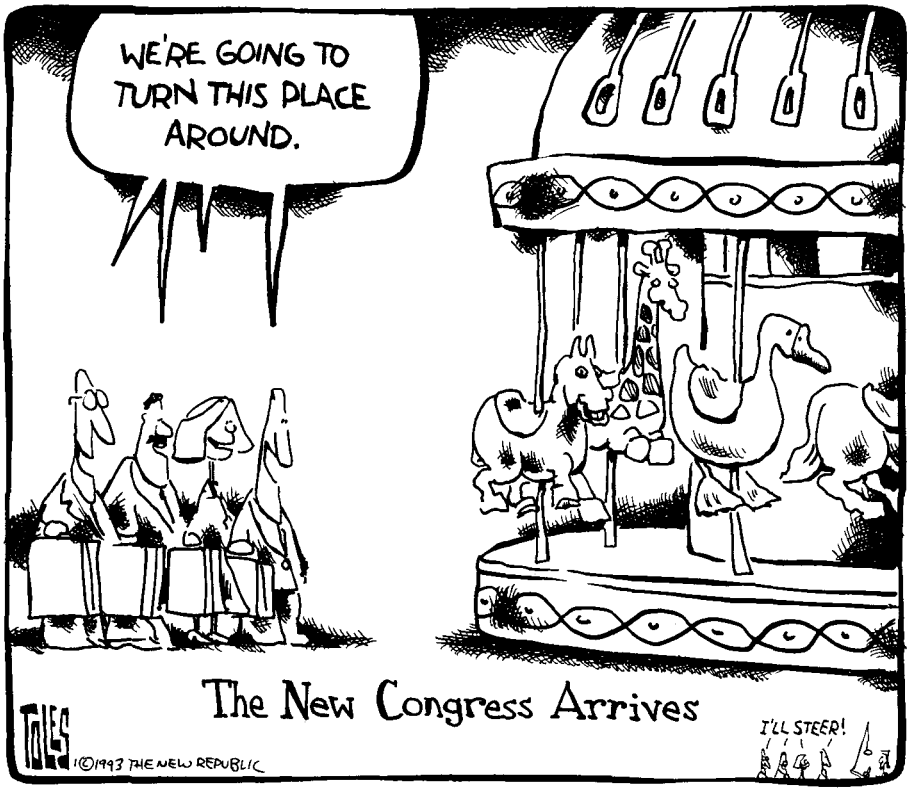
NOTEBOOK

ROCKY MOUNTAIN LOW: "The boycott is a legitimate weapon in a democratic society and, historically, one of the most effective," according to *The New York Times*'s endorsement of the Colorado tourist boycott. Wrong on both counts. Economic sanctions—whether against Iraq, Bosnia, Arizona or Israel—have, historically, almost always proved massively ineffective. Unlike consumer boycotts, geographic ones victimize those they aim to support. (In Colorado the progressive towns and cities that voted against the anti-gay rights amendment are those that stand to suffer the most.) Moreover, even when legally enforced, they are never tight enough to coerce change. Nor is a boycott a "legitimate" weapon to use against a democratic society, like Colorado's. At least in Iraq, or South Africa, one can justify the indiscriminate nature of the punishment by arguing that there is no other way to assist those we support, who are denied avenues of democratic free expression by their own governments. In Colorado, however, advocates of gay rights lost a fair fight, and will have another chance in the next election. We hope they win. As for Barbra Streisand and her fellow moral poseurs, wherever they're skiing this winter, we hope they break a leg.



SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN: It's nice to note at least one Clinton appointment that wasn't motivated by diversity, cronyism or any criterion other than the nominee's demonstrated abilities. We speak of John Gibbons, named to the post of White House science adviser, where he will be responsible for presenting the president with policy options on matters scientific and technological. That the Christmas Eve choice was barely noted in the press is a sign of how enervated this office became during the presidency of George Bush, when it was little more than a legitimizing apparatus for John Sununu's scientific views. Gibbons is a man to reverse this legacy. At the congressional Office of Technology Assessment, which he now heads, Gibbons earned a reputation for political independence and a willingness to make people mad. During his tenure, OTA's reports won high marks for translating highly complex, technical problems into lucid, educational, human terms. This, ultimately, is the job of the White House science adviser as well, and one for which Gibbons appears uniquely well qualified.

REST IN PEACE: Since its inception in 1984, the U.S. Peace Institute has suffered from an identity crisis. A hollow commission originally designed by post-World War II peaceniks to function as an antidote to the U.S. War College (a "West Point of Peace"), the institute didn't actually come into existence until the Reagan era, when its board was staffed with hawks like James Baker, Dick Cheney, and former president of the National Defense University, Vice Admiral J.A. Baldwin. This year the agency has outdone itself, awarding its first ever Medal of Peace to two people: Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter.

TRENDOIDS: Ever since its inauspicious debut on the weekend of the L.A. riots, *The New York Times*'s Sunday "Style" section has struggled each week to spot the minutest of trends, many of which vanish by the following Sunday, if they ever existed at all. For example, a November 15 story on the so-called "Grunge" movement included a "lexicon" of words employed by Seattle's flannel-clad, disaffected youth. The list included such colorful terms as "wack splat" (old ripped jeans) and "lame stain" (uncool person). Unfortunately, it was also a hoax. According to *The Baffler*, a Chicago-based journal, the glossary was invented by Megan Jasper, an employee of Caroline Records in Seattle, who first fooled the British magazine *Sky* with it before conning the *Times*. Next week in "Style": the rage for media pranks. •

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CROATIA POSTCARD

SURVIVORS

By Charles Lane

A stale mist of frozen breath and cigarette smoke hangs over the town square of Karlovac, Croatia. Hundreds of haggard men clad incongruously in bright blue, red or green ski jackets shuffle about on the chilly gray pavement. Every now and then someone spots an old friend, or a long-lost child or his mother—and a cry of recognition punctuates the collective murmur. But mostly the men converse quietly among themselves, or gaze at nothing in particular. They have recently been released from the Serb-run concentration camps in northern Bosnia.

The catastrophe of Bosnia's Muslims may not be, as some have analogized, the Holocaust. But it is a holocaust. And the men of Karlovac are holocaust survivors. Their faces, puffy and scarred like the mugs of welterweights, testify to savage beatings. Their blank eyes reflect psychological wounds. Months after the outside world first became aware of the camps' existence, international relief agencies are still working to get all the men out of the camps, to bring them to the barracks in Karlovac, to give them medical care and ski jackets—and to begin the laborious process of finding asylum for them in the West. Countries that chorused denunciation of the camps when confronted with television images of emaciated prisoners last August have been slow to offer refuge for the men and their families.

The stories the men tell are all more or less the same, but that heightens rather than diminishes their impact. Schefik, a square-jawed 38-year-old construction worker, lived in a Muslim village near Klucj. Serb forces surrounded his village with artillery sometime last spring but assured the people they would be safe if they didn't move. On June 26, Schefik says, the Serbs broke their promise. They arrested all the men in the village, packed them in buses and took them to a school building in Klucj. Local Serbs—children included—formed a gauntlet and beat the Muslims with clubs as they went in. Inside, each man was stripped to the waist, interrogated and savagely beaten by Serb police demanding to know where nonexistent weapons were kept. Schefik says he saw four men die from repeated beatings. He himself passed out three times from the rain of blows.

After two days in the school, Schefik was loaded onto another bus bound for the infamous Manjaca camp. A tape deck blared a song about how the Serbs would "butcher" Muslims there, while Serb police shook prisoners down for money and watches. The bus stopped en route, and local Serb women and children boarded to beat the prisoners. At the camp, a doctor measured the bruises on the men's backs; those whose bruises were considered minor based on this "medical examination" were taken out for additional punishment. The men were herded into cattle barns. "There was no light, no heating. They said, 'Find a place' but there was just sand and cement," Schefik recalls. "Every night they would call people out to take them to solitary confinement. Whoever was on the list to be killed would be killed." The list included all wealthy or prominent citizens, intellectuals and leaders of the Muslim Party of Democratic Action.

Prisoners who weren't killed were fed a diet of bread and water and forced to chop wood and pull large fields of weeds. As I learned from Schefik and other former Manjaca prisoners now at Karlovac, a team of forty Muslim craftsmen was ordered to rebuild an old Serbian Orthodox church that had fallen into disrepair near the site of the concentration camp. Guards taunted the men as "Turks" as they worked. For roofing material, the Serbs ordered them to use the copper roof of a nearby mosque that the Serbs had demolished. Schefik thought he would die in Manjaca; if international condemnation of the camps last August had not scared the Serb nationalist authorities into permitting the International Red Cross to visit and feed the prisoners, he might have.

The Karlovac survivors are trying to come to terms with the fact that so many of their former neighbors in Bosnia's small towns and villages were so readily recruited to the cause of ethnic cleansing. "My brother is married to a Serb. They live in Sarajevo," Schefik says. "I was friends with them. I drank coffee in their cafés. I went hunting with them. I cannot believe there could be that much hate in a person." Another survivor from Sanski Most told me he was accosted at Manjaca by a Serb who used to play soccer with him on a hometown team. "This is for that time you kicked me in practice," the guard told him—and proceeded to administer a fierce beating.

The men of Karlovac want asylum, but they also want guns. "I feel like a different person now," 22-year-old Edin, a Muslim from Prijedor, told me. His face reddened as he spoke about his time in the Omarska and Manjaca camps. "Now I would do some things I never would have done before. I don't know if it would make a difference to fight now, but I would." This widespread attitude is yet another measure of how toxic the political culture of Bosnia has become as a consequence of so many unchecked war crimes—of how late it is for the United States and other Western powers to be discussing military intervention. Intervention to create a safe haven for Muslim refugees may yet save thousands of lives, or force the Serbs to talk seriously at the bargaining table in Geneva. Yet Karlovac is just one of many places where the fresh rage of horribly wronged individuals is hardening into a permanent collective political grievance. It is a

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grievance that could haunt Europe for generations.

After all, this process has occurred repeatedly in the history of the Balkans, as ethnic groups have transformed remembered trauma into a contemporary rationale for violence. Many Serbs rationalize today's ethnic cleansing as a payback for the wrongs committed against their people by the Ottoman Turks. Now the Serbs' own horrible crimes could turn their propaganda about the threat of "Muslim fundamentalism" into a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy. Even if the survivors of today's savagery don't fulfill their vows to retake their homes, or even if they don't get a chance to try, some of their children will.

Perhaps the cycle might have been interrupted if outside powers had shown the Serbs that aggression in Bosnia would be met with punishing force, or if the West had attempted to shore up the Muslim-led government in Sarajevo before the war, when it was still pursuing relatively democratic, moderate solutions to the nation's multiethnic tensions. But, for reasons of its own, the West didn't take the risk, another fact that is on the list of things the men of Karlovac will never forget. "If 100,000 animals of some special breed were being slaughtered like this," one told me, "there would have been more of a reaction."

CHARLES LANE is Berlin bureau chief of *Newsweek.*

Shawn's sleepy weekly.

UNSLICK WILLY

By Joseph Nocera

At small gatherings—the only kind he could ever bear to attend—he could sometimes be persuaded to play some jazz piano. That's one of the little things we know about him now, along with the news that he ate a bowl of Special K for lunch each day at the Algonquin Hotel, that he "was given to minor but vivid phobias," that he had a "famous low couch" in his otherwise utilitarian office and that his exaggerated courtesy was so out of proportion to the condition of normal human discourse as to mark him as a true eccentric. William Shawn's death, at the age of 85, is of course what triggered the torrent of recent reminiscences (most published in *The New Yorker* itself), which, taken together, made the case that in addition to being an eccentric, William Shawn was a genius—"the most unreasonably modest born-great artist-editor," J. D. Salinger is supposed to have called him.

For thirty-five years—from 1952 to 1987—he edited *The New Yorker* in that gentle, almost preposterously serious way of his: reading every story at least three times (so we are now told), ever prepared to make "a transatlantic phone call on the matter of a semicolon" (George Steiner). Over the course of his reign, he took Harold Ross's "smarty-pants parish tip sheet" and turned it into "a journal that altered our experience instead of just posturing in front of it" (John Leonard). He had published "Hiroshima" by John Hersey, "Eichmann in Jerusalem" by Hannah Arendt, "Silent Spring" by Rachael Carson, "In Cold Blood" by Truman Capote, and "The Fate of the Earth" by Jonathan Schell. Those five stories became a mantra in the wake of his death, proof of his greatness: HiroshimaEichmanninJerusalemSilentSpringInColdBloodTheFateoftheEarth. One wondered (as, I suspect, one was supposed to wonder): Would Tina Brown have published them? It seems unlikely, somehow. Not "hot" enough.

There can be no doubting the sincerity of those at *The New Yorker* who believe that Shawn was a Great Man. I think it would have been nearly impossible to write for *The New Yorker* during his heyday and not come around to that view sooner or later—not after he called to tell you that your latest piece was "wonderful" and that he was truly, deeply grateful that you had written it and allowed him to publish it. You felt anointed writing for *The New Yorker.* But from our vantage point out here in readerland, Shawn's "genius," however obvious it seems inside *The New Yorker,* is not remotely an open-and-shut case. Indeed, when Shawn was finally pushed out in 1987 by S. I. Newhouse—a move that came nearly two years after Newhouse had bought the magazine for a staggering $170 million—the widespread attitude out here was: What took him so long?

Here are a few pertinent facts not found in the twelve pages of Shawn recollections published in *The New Yorker.* In 1966 *The New Yorker* contained 6,143 pages of advertising. It was the largest number of ad pages any American magazine has ever run in the post-television era; even more impressive, it came a year *after* the magazine stopped accepting cigarette ads. Unfortunately, it's been downhill ever since. Last year *The New Yorker* published around 2,300 ad pages. It is rumored to be losing millions of dollars.

Is it fair to lay this precipitate decline all on Shawn? Surely not. It was inevitable that other magazines would emerge to compete for *The New Yorker*'s upper-middle-class readership. But it is more than fair to lay a good deal of the blame at his feet. During the decades he ran his beloved *New Yorker*, he very nearly loved it to death.

One can see hints of this in the reminiscences of *New Yorker* writers. His judgments, his tastes, his vaunted eccentricities did not always help the cause. He once killed an article about fishing because, he explained, *The New Yorker* was "a vegetarian magazine." Some of his in-house rules about language strike one as bizarre: the words "wig," "tycoon," "gadget" and "promptly," among others, were not allowed to appear in the magazine. Important beats were placed off limits when key staff

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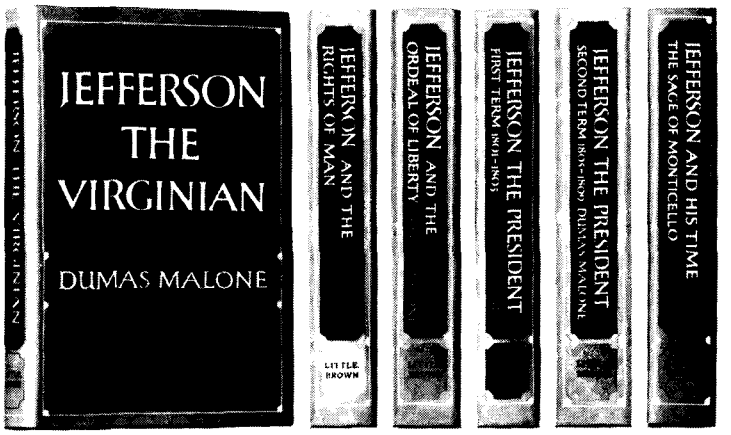

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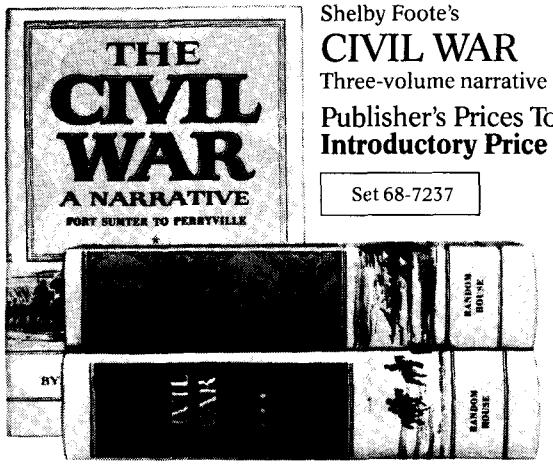

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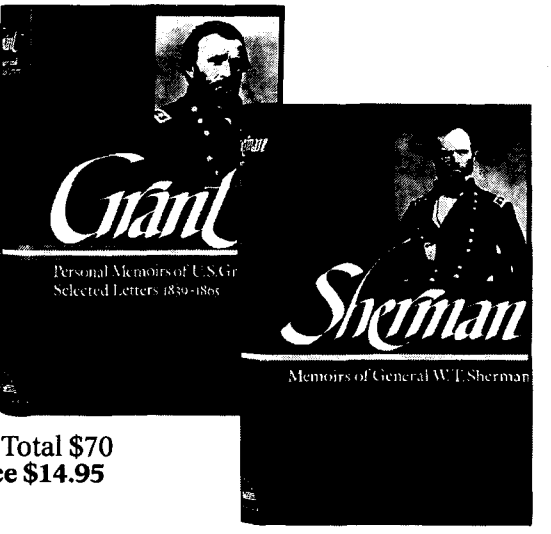

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members died or stopped writing; the press, for instance, could not be covered after A.J. Liebling died—as if doing so would somehow dishonor his memory. "We tell our editors not to improve pieces," he once told Elizabeth Drew. Why is this a good thing?

Many writers mentioned Shawn's legendary patience, his refusal to push a writer to finish a piece so he could get it into print. "Shawn knew—and we knew he knew—that writing is a process that can't be hurried" (Janet Malcolm). From the writer's point of view, no doubt, this was a wonderful thing. From a reader's standpoint, though, it could be unbearable. One article that comes to mind is Schell's interminable two-parter on one American family's attempt to decide whom to vote for in the 1984 presidential election. The article ran in 1987.

During the last two decades of Shawn's tenure—that is, during the decades of the magazine's decline—a style of non-fiction writing evolved. Too many *New Yorker* writers merely piled pointless fact upon pointless fact and endless, perfect quote after endless, perfect quote—as if they had forgotten that good magazine writing entails good thinking, not just good note-taking. The classic of the genre, E.J. Kahn's infamous multipart grain series, became a touchstone for *New Yorker* critics, not because it was aberrational but because it was paradigmatic: a *New Yorker* parody unwittingly published by *The New Yorker.*

The culture of *The New Yorker* had turned inward, a condition for which Shawn was directly responsible. *The New Yorker* had become a family, with Shawn as its father figure. Ultimately, Shawn was more concerned with satisfying the needs and wants of his writers and editors than with those of us who "merely" bought his magazine, and read it.

For this, Shawn made not the slightest apology; on the contrary, he wore his disdain of his readership like a badge of honor. "[W]e have never published anything in order to sell magazines, to cause a sensation, to be controversial, to be popular or fashionable, to be 'successful,'" he famously wrote after Newhouse bought *The New Yorker.* But even loyal subscribers had begun turning away from it. And as readers turned away, so did advertisers, a fact that Shawn gave no hint of even noticing, much less trying to change. The idea that in order to publish a magazine one must attract both readers and advertisers was something he found repulsive. He would never "stoop" to such a thing, and he never did. Every week now, when you pick up *The New Yorker*, you can see the result of his high-mindedness.

I met him only once, a long time ago. I sat in the famous low couch one afternoon, my chin between my knees, as this tiny, frail man loomed over me, thanking me profusely for taking time out of my busy schedule to come beg for a job. Naturally, I thanked him even more profusely for taking time out of his even busier schedule to turn me down. It took the rest of the day before the fog from that meeting began to lift. Later it occurred to me that the famous low couch, and the fawning, overpowering politeness were the greatest office power moves I'd ever witnessed.

JOSEPH NOCERA is a frequent contributor to THE NEW REPUBLIC.

The great S&L giveaway.

MOTIVATED SELLER

By Jonathan Silvers

Neither Congress nor the White House foresaw a rummage sale for the rich when they bailed out the S&L industry with the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery and Enforcement Act. Nonetheless, that's what happened. Since 1989 hundreds of Republican Party benefactors have purchased assets of the bankrupt thrifts from the Resolution Trust Corporation, and hundreds more have contracts pending. Many of the sales have resulted in windfall profits for the purchasers, and, by extension, windfall losses for the taxpayers.

Take the Bass brothers, who, in association with General Electric Capital Corporation in 1991, bought $1 billion in commercial real estate and loans from the RTC for $500 million. The General Accounting Office is currently investigating charges that RTC officials rejected bids approaching book value in order to secure the deal with the Texas billionaires. Or take Revlon cosmetics chairman Ronald Perlman. Last January he paid $35 million for the government's minority interest in First Gibraltar Savings and Loan. Shortly after the sale, RTC appraisers disclosed they had undervalued the thrift by $100 million. These are only two examples of the absurd bargains going to the politically well-connected.

How did it happen? Shortly after the RTC was established, agency regulators came to regard the FIRREA mandate as quixotic. "We were required to isolate, manage and sell off the assets from some 700 failed institutions worth $360 billion by 1996," said L. William Seidman, former RTC chairman. "To do it, we were given a confused and unusual organizational chart, which made it hard to get started and harder to get things done. Given the job ahead of us, we thought it would speed things up if we operated in a less bureaucratic environment." Consequently, one year into the RTC's mission, private sector efficiencies were imposed on what had been conceived as an orthodox bureaucracy. Senior staff embraced a dynamic corporate style, with private sector amenities like redecorated offices and bonus pay. The $50 million restructuring was defended on grounds that the RTC had more assets than Citibank.

What the agency gained in stature, however, it lost in accountability. The reforms may have expedited

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decision-making, but they also shielded the RTC chairman and his executive committee from outside scrutiny. By mid-1991 no one in the government (or the news media) could say with any certainty how the S&L bailout was going. Regulators, uncommunicative to begin with, became downright evasive. Oversight committees and public watchdogs were permitted fewer opportunities to question the CEO. External auditors were frequently denied access to RTC accounts or given incomplete or misleading data.

In the spring of 1992 a series of audits and congressional hearings revealed why the RTC had become so evasive: regulators were often unequal to the task for which they were hired. The GAO discovered numerous errors in the agency's general ledger. Nearly a third of the entries in the RTC's $100 million real estate management data base—the heart of its resale operations—were found to have been entered incorrectly, and a significant number of appraisals were off by factors of five or ten. A Phoenix condominium with a market value of $73,000 was, according to the computer, worth $79 million. A California subdivision of seventy homes was listed at one-sixth its value. "They don't know what they've got," lamented Charles Bowsher, U.S. controller general, after his staff inventoried RTC holdings.

When the computer system was junked last fall, employees and contractors fell back on antiquated (i.e., manual) data collection methods. In November the RTC's Denver office suffered a temporary $7 billion loss when a private contractor neglected to enter the assets of a defunct thrift into the regional data base. The shortfall caused much panic and evoked a mea culpa from RTC chairman Albert Casey: "Our system of internal controls in the Western region was in some cases functionally nonexistent and more generally inadequate."

In fact, the RTC's inadequacies extended far beyond its Denver office. The Senate Banking Committee found that RTC liquidation specialists worked with minimal supervision, hawking assets with little regard to price or impact on the regional economy. Last July 2,000 Orange County building lots were sold for 60 percent of their market value, and a county realtor's group reported a sharp decline in neighboring home values following the sale. One regional sales manager claimed this approach was condoned at the highest level: "We sold trophy properties in our first year at an average return of 85 percent. When the good stuff was gone, we were instructed to take whatever we could get for the rest. In some cases we were told to accept offers 50 percent or 70 percent below book value just to clear out inventory."

This fire sale mentality contrasted sharply with FIRREA guidelines, which encourage officials to take properties off the block when market conditions are unfavorable. Everything left unsold when the RTC's mandate expires is to be absorbed by the FDIC. "Casey's insistence on selling out to the bare walls is a disservice to the taxpayer," said Senator Howard Metzenbaum. "The prudent thing would be to wait for conditions to improve and sell selectively. If the depression in the housing market continues and RTC continues this wholesale dumping, its recovery rate will average 60 percent of asset value. That means for the FSLIC to fulfill its obligations to depositors, the federal government will have to make up the 40 percent shortfall."

If the sales staff has been overly aggressive, the RTC's legal affairs division, known as the Professional Liability Staff, has achieved notoriety for its inactivity. House Banking Committee chairman Henry Gonzalez has ascribed half of all thrift and bank failures in the 1980s to fraud or willful mismanagement. The PLS has reviewed less than 40 percent of those cases, and targeted less than 20 percent for civil or criminal action. Moreover, PLS attorneys have repeatedly failed to meet statute of limitation deadlines, immunizing hundreds and perhaps thousands of felons from prosecution. This combination of lax enforcement and administrative bungling has resulted so far in the forfeiture of $1.3 billion in potentially recoverable assets. To make matters worse, the ranks of PLS attorneys and investigators were thinned last summer at some bureaus by as much as two-thirds, crippling the government's ability to recover misappropriated funds.

Many of RTC's problems can be attributed to the revolving door. Short on time and expertise, the agency hired battalions of lawyers, accountants and financiers from the very institutions it was trying to salvage. The *Los Angeles Times* estimates that 30 percent of the RTC's management had ties to insolvent S&Ls. Several were offered senior positions despite evidence of having participated in unethical or illegal activities. Prior to his appointment as RTC general counsel, Gerald Jacobs represented an Arizona real estate firm whose relationship with a Phoenix S&L was cited in a $1.3 billion federal fraud and racketeering suit. Moreover, the RTC continues to do business with firms it has supposedly blacklisted or is suing. Coopers and Lybrand, one of five accounting firms fined $20 million for "conduct contributing to thrift insolvency," was subsequently awarded a $50 million consulting contract. An RTC spokesman claimed the firm's services "are essential to our success."

The bailout operation has come to resemble nothing so much as a disreputable S&L in the heady days preceding its downfall. In 1991 Timothy Ryan, director of the Office of Thrift Supervision, authorized the sale of the Miami CenTrust tower to a fraternity brother for 30 percent of its appraised value. Last October a contract for the Bexar Saving Tower in San Antonio was canceled days before closing. The tower was later included in a bulk sale to the Patriot American investment group. The $10 million commission on the deal went to a brokerage firm whose principals include former Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci and Bush campaign manager Fred Malek. In January then-general counsel Jacobs circulated a memo reminding his staff to give preferential treatment to lawyers recommended for jobs by the White House—"whether or not there are existing vacancies."

Though abuse is legion at the RTC, reports of it are rare. Brokers and investors seldom complain if competitive bidding rights are suspended, or if deals are can-

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celed without explanation. Parties to sweetheart contracts don't boast about their profits. Not until August, when three whistleblowers were invited to testify before the Senate Banking Committee, did the public learn how venal the RTC had become. Jacqueline P. Taylor, an attorney with the Western regional office, maintained that the aggressive pursuit of negligent or criminal S&L operators was obstructed by top agency officials. She testified that her unit was routinely forced to drop suits against politically connected defendants or to accept token settlements. "In one case where certain targets had been approved for suit I was offered a settlement that I considered to be thoroughly inappropriate. When I explained to my director that I would not settle on this basis, I was told that I was on very shaky political ground and that I should rethink my position. We're talking about a $30,000 settlement in a case where there was a liability of tens of millions." In another instance an RTC action was dropped against a Utah S&L shortly after George Bush met with one of the owners.

After the summer hearings, both congressional banking committees pledged to redouble their oversight efforts. That would have been a good idea a few years ago. By now the RTC has resolved 80 percent of the S&Ls it seized and sold off $250 billion in assets. With less than $120 billion of low-end merchandise remaining, Casey recently activated plans to halve agency operations by 1993. Nine regional offices have been closed and five states declared RTC-free. It's a little late to start cleaning up the S&L clean-up mess.

JONATHAN SILVERS is a free-lance journalist based in New York.

Clinton and the hawks.

NEOCONNED

By Fred Barnes

When Democratic neoconservatives blasted Anthony Lake, then Bill Clinton's campaign adviser on foreign policy, in an article in the Jewish newspaper *The Forward* last April, it provoked peace, not war. Lake was blamed for blocking neocon hard-liners from getting foreign policy posts in the Carter administration. In response to the attack, Lake called Washington attorney Peter Rosenblatt, the one neocon who'd gotten a job, ambassador to Micronesia. ("Not Indonesia, not Polynesia, not Macronesia, but Micronesia," Elliott Abrams, then a Democrat, said mockingly back in 1976.) Lake was conciliatory. He began long discussions with neocons and sought their advice. A group of neocons publicly endorsed Clinton in July in a *New York Times* ad. Later Penn Kemble wrote Clinton's major speech enunciating a policy of promoting democracy around the world. And neocons were assured they wouldn't be shut out of influential positions. The Clinton administration would be different.

Then again, maybe not. Neocons and their allies in the moderate Democratic Leadership Council and Jewish community were reconciled to the appointment of Lake, policy planning chief in the Carter State Department, as national security adviser. Lake has persuaded them his views now roughly match theirs, particularly on the use of military force. But neocons winced when Warren Christopher was picked as secretary of state and when Christopher sought to install other Carter retreads in the second and third spots. Worse, lesser foreign jobs are not falling into neocon laps.

The problem with Christopher is his obsession with negotiations, his fear of force, his lack of intellectual firepower and his identification with Carter's policy of pressuring Israel. In the *American Spectator*, Colonel Charles Beckwith, who headed the aborted 1980 mission to rescue American hostages in Tehran, says Christopher balked at killing the Revolutionary Guards holding the Americans. Christopher suggested the Guards be wounded. Some Jewish leaders quietly opposed Christopher too. Neocons, including AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, pushed Senator Bill Bradley of New Jersey for secretary of state. Though not quite a hard-liner—he opposed Desert Storm—Bradley was touted as an internationalist, an expert on global economics and a proponent of creating democratic institutions around the world. Bradley was willing, but Christopher was probably Clinton's choice all along.

The neocon candidate for deputy secretary, former Representative Steve Solarz of New York, fared no better. Solarz isn't exactly a hard-liner, but he's an internationalist, a supporter of Desert Storm and strongly pro-Israel—and he was an early backer of Clinton. Solarz was as acceptable to liberals who think human rights should be the dominant concern of foreign policy as he was to neocons. Besides, he's someone the Jewish community is comfortable with and a major foreign policy thinker, things Christopher can't claim. Christopher first wanted John Trattner, a Carter State Department flack. That drew complaints the department would look like Carter II, so Clifford Wharton, who runs a pension fund, was imposed on Christopher.

This made Christopher all the more intent on getting his own man as undersecretary for political affairs, the third-ranking post. Again neocons urged Solarz. "We ran a full-court press for Steve," said a neocon who's also a pal of Clinton's. It failed in part for the same reason Solarz lost out for deputy secretary: the Justice Department's special investigator in the House banking scandal hasn't certified Solarz as free of wrong-doing. (Solarz kited nearly 900 checks.) Christopher's choice for No. 3 is Peter Tarnoff, Cyrus Vance's chief of staff in the Carter years and now head of the Council on Foreign Relations.

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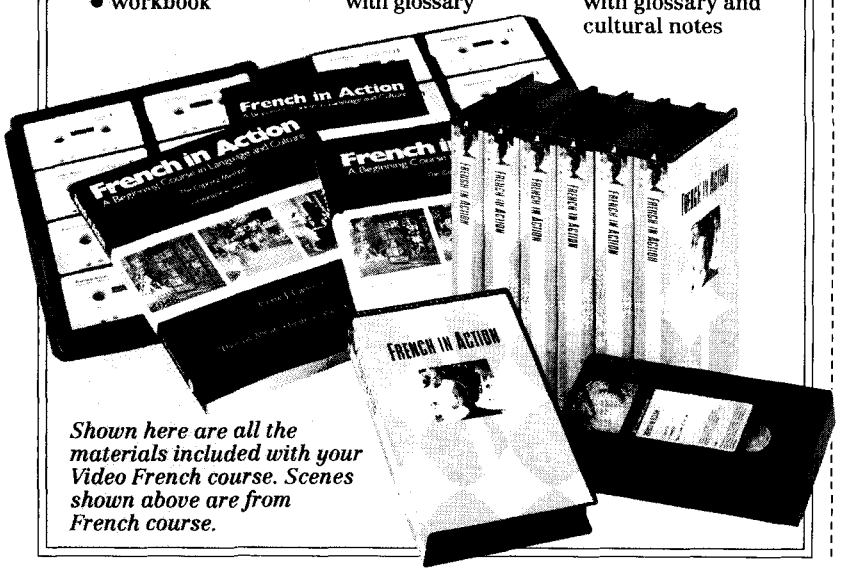

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More than any prospective Carter nominee, Tarnoff drives neocons, moderates and supporters of Israel crazy.

For good reason. Tarnoff was embarrassingly wrong about the Persian Gulf war. In November 1990 he wrote in *The New York Times* that President Bush should try to build a United Nations force to confront Saddam Hussein. If the Security Council didn't go along by the end of 1990, Bush should reduce U.S. forces to 100,000 troops, "adequate for the defense of Saudi Arabia and the enforcement of economic sanctions against Iraq." With concessions to Iraq, Kuwait's ruling class would be restored, he wrote. In February 1991 he recommended against a ground attack on Iraqi forces. The air war had already "cut Saddam Hussein down to size," he insisted. A land attack would "make the Iraqi ruler a major world troublemaker again and ... vindicate his actions in the eyes of his followers." As it turned out, the problem was not that Bush ordered a ground war but that he halted it a day or two prematurely.

Having lost the top jobs, neocons and Jewish leaders have put together a list of lesser posts they want allies to fill: assistant secretary of state for human rights, assistant secretary for Near East affairs, director of the USIA, etc. Here their chances are better, but none of their candidates is a shoo-in. The most qualified is Josh Muravchik of the American Enterprise Institute for the human rights post. He's a theoretician of promoting democracy as a major element of American foreign policy. But he has enemies on the left. Leaders of both Human Rights Watch and the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights clashed with Muravchik in the 1980s over his support for the Nicaraguan contras, and they're lobbying against him now. Their efforts may be working. Edward Feighen, a former Democratic House member from Ohio, was recruited as a candidate for the job by officials of the Clinton transition. Democratic Senator Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut and Democratic Representative Dave McCurdy of Oklahoma have personally touted Muravchik to Clinton. "He listened," says Lieberman. Selecting Muravchik gives Clinton "an opportunity to send a message" that he'll pursue "a centrist policy," Lieberman argues.

There are other opportunities. If Clinton aims to make export of democracy a top theme of his foreign policy, the USIA will rise in importance. The logical person for that job is Ben Wattenberg, the conservative Democrat, and former member of the Board for International Broadcasting. Wattenberg doesn't want it. Neocons have two back-ups, Kemble of Freedom House, who ran the Clinton transition at USIA, and Brian Atwood, the top transition figure at State (no, the Christopher nomination isn't his fault). Another neocon owed by Clinton is Richard Schifter, who quit as Bush's human rights official at State to back Clinton. Schifter wants to run the Agency for International Development.

If personnel is policy, Clinton won't be taking the same tack as president that he took as candidate—unless neocons and their allies get significant jobs. Far more than Christopher, they champion the policy Clinton trumpeted in the campaign (strong military, willingness to intervene, pro-democracy, pro-human rights). "It's important to validate it and punctuate it by the people you appoint," says Lieberman. So far, not so good. •

Beyond interventionism.

MISSION CONTROL

By Ronald Steel

Bill Clinton today inherits an outdated diplomacy forged in 1946. Back then, with Japan and Germany destroyed, Britain and France reduced to dependency and the wartime alliance with the Soviet Union falling apart, the nation redefined its relationship with the world. The pre-war policy of isolationism had become irrelevant, the old balance of power could not be reconstituted and Moscow seemed menacing. From the foundation of American power, officials crafted a policy of sweeping scope.

Its twin anchors were containment and expansion: containment of Soviet territorial temptations through military and economic power; expansion through alliances, investments, bases and bribes, pushing America's reach across the globe. This policy restrained Soviet ambitions and ushered in an era of dominance from Washington justly called the Pax Americana.

Today that era is behind us, a casualty of the very success of containment and the economic recovery of Europe and Asia. Containment has become irrelevant, and with it the enormous military apparatus constructed in its name. We are left with a doctrine deprived of its logic, and with a military force—capable of wiping whole countries off the map—without a mission commensurate with its power.

The collapse of Soviet power has also, paradoxically, removed one of the sources of order in the world. Soviet communism, for all its evils, was the mucilage that held in check the violent nationalism of Eastern Europe and the old Soviet republics. It also enabled the superpowers to exert considerable control over their more unruly Third World clients. Moscow, for example, almost certainly would not have allowed Saddam Hussein to attack Kuwait. Nor would Washington have so long tolerated the anarchic banditry of "strategically located" Somalia.

The cold war ended in a way that confirmed our power. Now the United States is the only nation with the means and the theoretical will to exert great force anywhere it wishes and for goals it deems desirable. But the theoretical power is deceptive, for in much of the world we can exert our power and still not assert our will. George Bush unwillingly retires to Houston while

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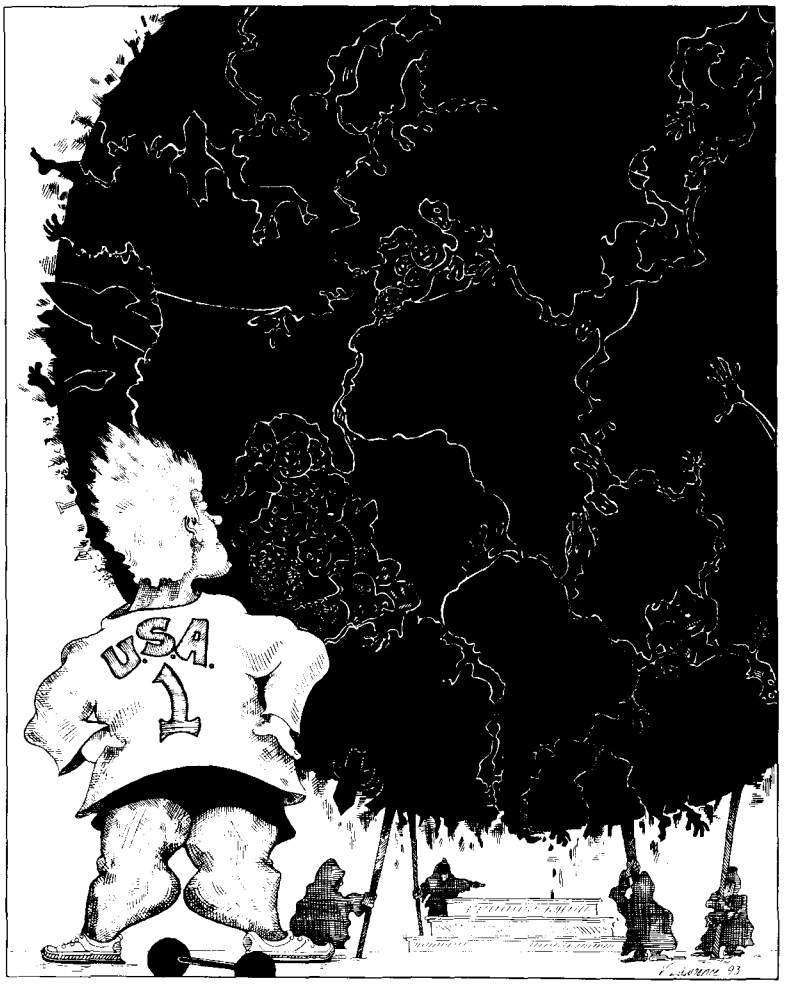
Saddam Hussein still rules in Baghdad.

The Clinton team must not merely manage crises, but also forge a foreign policy for a post-containment, post-Soviet world. In the absence of any overriding concept, it is easy to fall back on familiar formulas: national interest, balance of power, Wilsonian universalism, democratization and humanitarianism. These correspond either to verities of the game of nations (like national interest) or to deep-seated beliefs of the American experience (like Wilsonian universalism). As guideposts for a post-containment diplomacy they are vague and inadequate.

National interest is a slogan beloved by political scientists and diplomats. Its major virtue, and its great failing, is that it can mean just about whatever one wishes, from aggressive interventionism to passive indifference. During the cold war it meant anti-communism. Today it could mean anything from competitiveness to protectionism to environmental protection. It is both a catch-all and a sieve.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

The object of balance of power, a staple of British diplomacy until World War II, was to prevent any single nation from gaining overwhelming power on the European continent. Its method was to forge cynical alliances of convenience with whatever nations seemed to be helpful in that endeavor. When it worked it was useful; when it didn't, as in 1914 and 1939, it brought on catastrophe. It requires a subtlety of orchestration continually subject to breakdown. In any case, until China—joined perhaps by Japan and a unified Europe—rises to serious military power, that world is still on the horizon.

Wilsonian universalism, with its vision of converting the world to goodness and democracy, is deeply rooted in American messianism. As a people we have always responded to the notion that the United States was placed in this world for a redeeming purpose. This long antedates Woodrow Wilson, but he expressed it better than anyone. As he explained in his April 1917 message to Congress, the United States would enter the European war "for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own government, for the rights and liberties of small nations . . . and to make the world itself at last free." It is not surprising that such expansive visions have produced both great ambitions, such as our various efforts to build nations and implant democracy, and frequent disappointments when others just don't seem to learn.

Humanitarianism periodically inspires nations as it does individuals. It can be an expression of altruism, and also one of power, for there is considerable pleasure in exerting it in what one firmly believes to be a righteous cause. Like all virtuous acts, it is strong on a sense of conviction, but less so on proportion and measure. Ideally the cause for action should be unqualifiedly just, and its execution should inflict no harm on either donor or recipient. Often this is easier said than done. For example, our "Restore Hope" intervention in Somalia, which has fed the hungry and unquestionably has alleviated some of the nation's suffering, may also have intensified the clan violence. It almost certainly has involved the United States in an effort of "nation-building" that is likely to persist for years. And it could sour enthusiasm for intervention elsewhere in the chaotic Third World.

At the moment—in the absence of any serious foreign foe—humanitarianism and Wilsonianism dominate our diplomacy. The fact that our gravest foreign concerns are hunger in Somalia and ethnic violence in the old Yugoslavia is indicative of how far behind we have left the cold war, and even the fear of external threat. In part the support for intervention in both of these countries stems from public revulsion—stimulated by horrifying television images—of human suffering. Across the political spectrum, from Carterite doves to Reaganite hawks, there is the belief that the United States must "do something." Even those who opposed the Vietnam and Gulf wars favor intervention in these countries. In part, also, the support rests on a belief that the United States, as the world's only superpower, must show "leadership."

Here, traditionally force-shy liberals have formed a

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strange alliance with the old Reaganites, particularly with the neoconservatives. The latter, who have shown little concern in the past with the fate of refugees persecuted by U.S.-supported strongmen in such places as El Salvador and Guatemala, now urge intervention on the side of the oppressed, especially in Bosnia. During the cold war they restricted their calls for military intervention to cases of Communist expansion. Now, with the pretense of containment dropped, they embrace the opportunity to intervene virtually anywhere as a matter of principle. Thus, because of the brutality of Serbian forces, the complex issue of the borders of a Bosnian state has activated an increasingly likely U.S. intervention, supported for opposite reasons by liberals and conservatives.

It is ironic that there should be such enthusiasm, in Washington at least, for intervention in civil wars at a time when we have supposedly dedicated ourselves to repairing the economy and the ruptured social fabric. No doubt part of this enthusiasm can be ascribed to post-imperial letdown. Having run much of the world for the past half-century, it is not easy to adjust to a situation where military might seems to produce so few political results. We are in a position not unlike that of the British after the Second World War, whom Dean Acheson, Truman's acerbic secretary of state, chided for having "lost an empire and not yet found a role."

George Bush, who presided over the transition from the cold war period, fashioned no guidelines for dealing with what he called a "new world order." That has now become the urgent task of the Clinton team. In addressing this, it must disentangle itself from the three guiding shibboleths of cold war diplomacy: democracy, stability and leadership. Unlike the formulas of engagement, such as national interest or Wilsonianism, these are inspirations for action. They define what we believe we are supposed to do.

Everybody extols democracy: even authoritarians. Yet it can be a minefield of good intentions. Unless the ground is carefully prepared by decades of practice and prosperity, it can collapse into atavistic intolerance, intimidation and chaos as in some of the "new democracies" of Eastern Europe. A Soviet empire plunged too quickly into free-for-all democracy could descend even faster into fascism, through public disgust with incompetence, impoverishment and corruption.

Further, the "people's choice" is likely to bring to power anti-Western Islamic fundamentalists throughout the Muslim world, as is being demonstrated in Algeria, where the military (with a sigh of relief from Western chanceries) annulled a free election that fundamentalists won. Is it hypocrisy to declare that democracy is our highest priority when it threatens the pro-Western leadership of such states as Russia, Egypt and Saudi Arabia?

Instead of promoting democracy as an absolute in itself, we might more realistically focus on the conditions that encourage equality, opportunity, prosperity, tolerance, the rule of law. When these are assured, democracy will follow. Until they are, it will be hollow, fictive and premature.

The second shibboleth, stability, is one to which all status quo powers, like our own, pay homage. They have good reason to, for they are content with their position. But stability comes from balance inside a country. It cannot be imposed from without. Look at the tribulations of the British in Northern Ireland, who have been trying to enforce their notion of order for a century.

If we intervene with troops in Bosnia, where the factions are far more violent and the hatreds more intense, we are likely not only to incur the enmity of all sides—as the U.N. already has for trying to find a middle ground—but to be stuck in a conflict we neither understand nor can resolve. In relatively bucolic Cyprus, the U.N. sent forces twenty-eight years ago to separate the contentious Greeks and Turks. These too are people who once lived together in harmony and later went for each others' throats. The U.N. troops are still there.

The third and perhaps most insidious shibboleth is that of leadership. This is one to which we, as directors of the free world for half a century, are particularly susceptible. This may also be Clinton's weak spot. As a hands-on leader of the economy, will he not also want to coax the world into shape? He is likely to be strongly prodded, for a good many foreign policy professionals tend to see the nation's domestic troubles as a distraction from the real work of running the world. For those whose focus starts at the water's edge, leadership is a healthy replacement for the cold war.

Here we certainly have our work cut out for us. The bloodiness in Yugoslavia is quite likely to be repeated elsewhere in the old Soviet empire. The Muslim, Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires did not disintegrate peacefully, and neither will this one. So far we have seen only the first aftershocks. To imagine that sending U.S./U.N. forces into Bosnia will dissuade resentful ethnic groups elsewhere from seizing each other's turf is to engage in the most naive kind of domino theorizing. Not only Serbs, Muslims and Croatians, but Slovaks, Hungarians, Albanians, Romanians, Ukrainians, Armenians, Georgians, Azeris and others have ancient grievances to settle with one another. Elsewhere the prognosis is no more promising. Ethnic and religious violence in India and Sri Lanka, tribal conflict in great chunks of Africa, the return to civil war in Cambodia, the high potential for explosion in Central Asia and the ambitions of a rearmed Iran all give cause for caution and modesty.

Just as there is much the United States can do in the world, there is also much that we cannot do. This has been a violent century, and it is likely to become even more so. If Western Europe has finally gone beyond murderous nationalism to mutual dependency, the same is not true of the eastern parts of the continent or of countries elsewhere in chaotic transition from tribalism to modernity. Some of these transitions can be mitigated by assistance from the industrialized democracies, and should be wherever possible. But here excess zeal is as dangerous as indifference, and there are quarrels into which even well-intentioned angels should fear to tread.

Where we can be most effective, now that we are

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finally rid of cold war preoccupations, is in confronting the global issues that go beyond tribal conflicts: the protection of our imperiled environment, the control of population growth, the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the politically untenable disparity of living conditions between North and South. These problems are not susceptible to easy fixes or marching troops. They will not elicit applause at home or victory parades. They may not even make us feel virtuous. Neither as glamorous nor as inspiring as an invasion, they will test not merely Bill Clinton's energy, but his capacity for prudent restraint. •

The case for collective security.

BOLD OLD VISION

By Robert Wright

Ever since Bill Clinton assembled his foreign policy team, there has been grumbling about its lack of a bold new vision. This drab collection of Carter administration alumni, we're told again and again, isn't up to the task of navigating the treacherous currents of post-cold war history.

A fairly standard feature of these plaints is to not specify what the vision should be. Maybe this omission is cause for hope: if the grumblers don't know where the Clinton team should head, how can they be sure its basic instincts won't lead in the right direction? Indeed, there are grounds for believing that this will happen—that a grand and timely foreign policy paradigm can take root naturally in the Clinton administration.

The bold new vision I have in mind isn't really new. It's the doctrine of collective security, which has surfaced twice this century, first with the League of Nations, and then, in the 1940s, with the United Nations. Both times it was battered by prevailing winds (most recently the cold war, which gridlocked the Security Council) and then dismissed as too idealistic. But it keeps coming back. In fact, it seems to come back almost without being invited. The Bush administration has partly resurrected the doctrine with no apparent consciousness of the fact, except in hindsight.

Collective security is a simple idea. World peace is "indivisible"; aggression against any nation is a threat to all nations; the international community is obliged to ensure that this crime doesn't pay, and may employ whatever force it deems appropriate, including armed attack against the aggressor. (Under the U.N. Charter, the Security Council does the deeming.)

In practice, of course, collective security is messy. Making it work is a dicey task and demands unflinching American commitment. And even once the doctrine is working, it is hardly a cure for all the planet's ills. It doesn't promise to save the Somalias of the world, places where order collapses but no national borders are violated. It doesn't promise to depose dictators, foster democracy or protect human rights. And it won't rid the world of nuclear weapons. These problems may be amenable to collective action, but not to collective security, at least not in the strict sense of the term.

What collective security does promise is to keep war from engulfing the world—or even a region—and to widely distribute the costs of this guarantee. This promise, presumably attractive to most nations in the nuclear age, should hold special appeal for the nation that is otherwise the leading candidate for Globo-cop. Collective security may well be the only vehicle through which U.S. leadership can preserve world order at a cost—in dollars and in lives—that Americans find tolerable.

The Persian Gulf war wasn't a textbook example of collective security, but it illustrates some of the doctrine's virtues. The financial costs were widely shared, even if the human costs weren't. And though the war was basically an American production, the U.N.'s blessing, and the multinational forces, were valuable. They brought tangible legitimacy, muting opposition that might have faced a unilateral intervention or an ad hoc multilateral one.

The Gulf war also demonstrated the flexibility of the U.N. Technically, the U.N. Charter calls for standing commitments of troops from member nations, to be drawn upon at the Security Council's discretion and then placed under its command. But because of the cold war, these commitments were never made. So for the Gulf war, troops were committed on a one-time basis and a command structure was improvised. There is talk now of finally giving the U.N. a permanent military capability, and maybe someday it will happen. (It's not as scary as it sounds; the United States, as a permanent member of the Security Council, can veto any use of U.N. force.) In the meantime, there are many ways to muster forces under U.N. auspices. NATO, for example,

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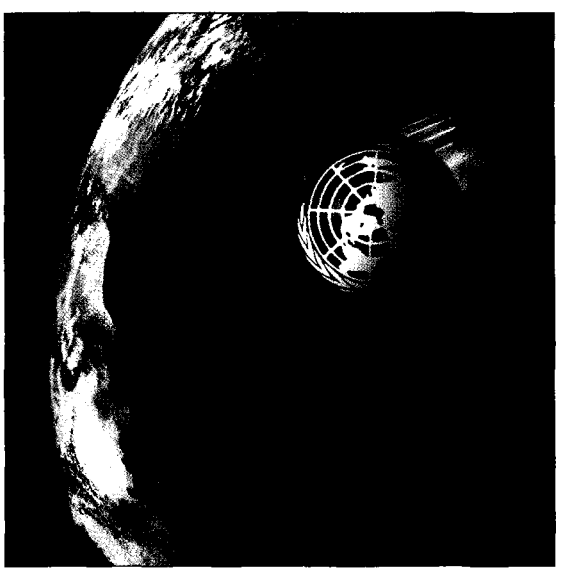
could be deputized for specific missions in Europe.

As Joseph Lorenz of the U.S. Institute of Peace has noted, the Gulf war was in some ways a poor test of collective security. In Kuwait a great power (us) saw its interests immediately threatened. But the real test comes with violations of territorial integrity that don't threaten a great power—as in the former Yugoslavia. Bosnia-Herzegovina isn't, by itself, of much interest to us or to Western Europe. But it is a member of the U.N., and is under attack in part, at least, from beyond its borders. So here the question is clear: Can the U.N., in the post-cold war world, make peace indivisible?

The Security Council, after months of dithering, is close to failing this test. There may still be time to salvage a C–, but for now the Bosnian crisis serves as the favorite example of collective security's detractors: If it's such a great doctrine, why doesn't it work?

One answer is that it can't work without leadership, and in Yugoslavia the vacuum was breathtaking. Much has been said about the failure of European leaders to nip the crisis in the bud. But what about President Bush? The Gulf war had turned him into the most credibly threatening man in the world, complete with the cloak of international law. Yet he made no real effort to lead the Security Council in facing down a minor-league war-monger who was just starting to test the waters.



BY JIM HOLLOWAY FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

To launch an exercise as bloody as Desert Storm and then let the hard-won political capital dissipate is little short of criminal. The only way to make sufficient moral sense of all those dead Iraqis would be to use them to prevent future wars. That is what collective security aims to do: minimize future use of force by maximizing the value of painfully earned precedents. Hence the importance of unswerving enforcement of the doctrine.

Leadership failures aside, the Bosnian mess does exhibit some of the stubborn problems with collective security. Foremost is that intervention is never an enticing prospect, least of all when your interests aren't directly threatened. As Walter Lippmann put it: the trouble with collective security is that it is "just as terrifying to the policeman as it is to the lawbreaker."

During the cold war, however, technological change somewhat deflated Lippmann's aphorism. As the Gulf war showed, cruise missiles and other "smart" weapons are ideal for inflicting grave harm at little risk. For some time to come, cutting-edge smart-weapons technology will be dominated by the Western democracies. So long as these nations check proliferation, U.N.-backed forces can count on this crucial edge.

Such forces can, for example, attack Serbian military targets in Bosnia, and for that matter in Serbia, with considerable precision and virtual impunity. Granted, aerial assault is almost never enough, by itself, to roll back aggression. But it can put people in a mood to negotiate. And when combined with other measures short of a U.N. ground assault—like arming the Bosnians, if necessary—it *can* roll back aggression.

Besides, even if nothing on the ground changes, there may be long-term value in strictly punitive assaults. If the Security Council earned a reputation for reliably greeting aggressors with significant harm, inflicted surgically and with little risk (and perhaps combined with lasting economic sanctions), would-be aggressors might pause and reflect.

The global inequity in weapons technology points to another drawback of unilateral intervention. For the United States alone to casually kill hordes of young men from poor nations by remote control is a very different matter—legally, morally and, in the long run, geopolitically—than for the U.N. to do it.

Of course, even with U.N. support, there is still something chilling about the prospect of safely dishing out death to soldiers who had the misfortune of being born in a technologically disadvantaged and aggressive nation. Then again, the safeness of the exercise is what makes it credibly repeatable, and the credibility is what keeps repetition from being very often necessary. A tolerance for irony is as important with collective security as it is with nuclear deterrence.

But are we likely to see *real* collective security anytime soon? If Bosnia becomes another Gulf war—an American-instigated mission drawing mainly on American forces—has the Security Council played a real role? It is popular to say no. Some on the left complain about the U.N. being "merely" an imperialist tool. Some on the right rejoice in roughly the same idea, taking pleasure in U.S. "manipulation" of the U.N.

But there's nothing wrong with the Security Council being prodded into action by a particular nation, or with that nation shouldering much of the burden. Trouble arises only if the lead nation is always the same nation. This feeds cynicism and erodes the Security Council's unique legitimacy—and doesn't help the fiscal health of the nation doing the heavy lifting. As everyone has pointed out, Bosnia proves that the world is still in the habit of looking to the United States for leadership and burden-shouldering, even when the costs of inaction are widely shared. But that can change, and change can be incremental. A Bosnian mission that drew heavily on, say, non-American NATO forces could be the first step.

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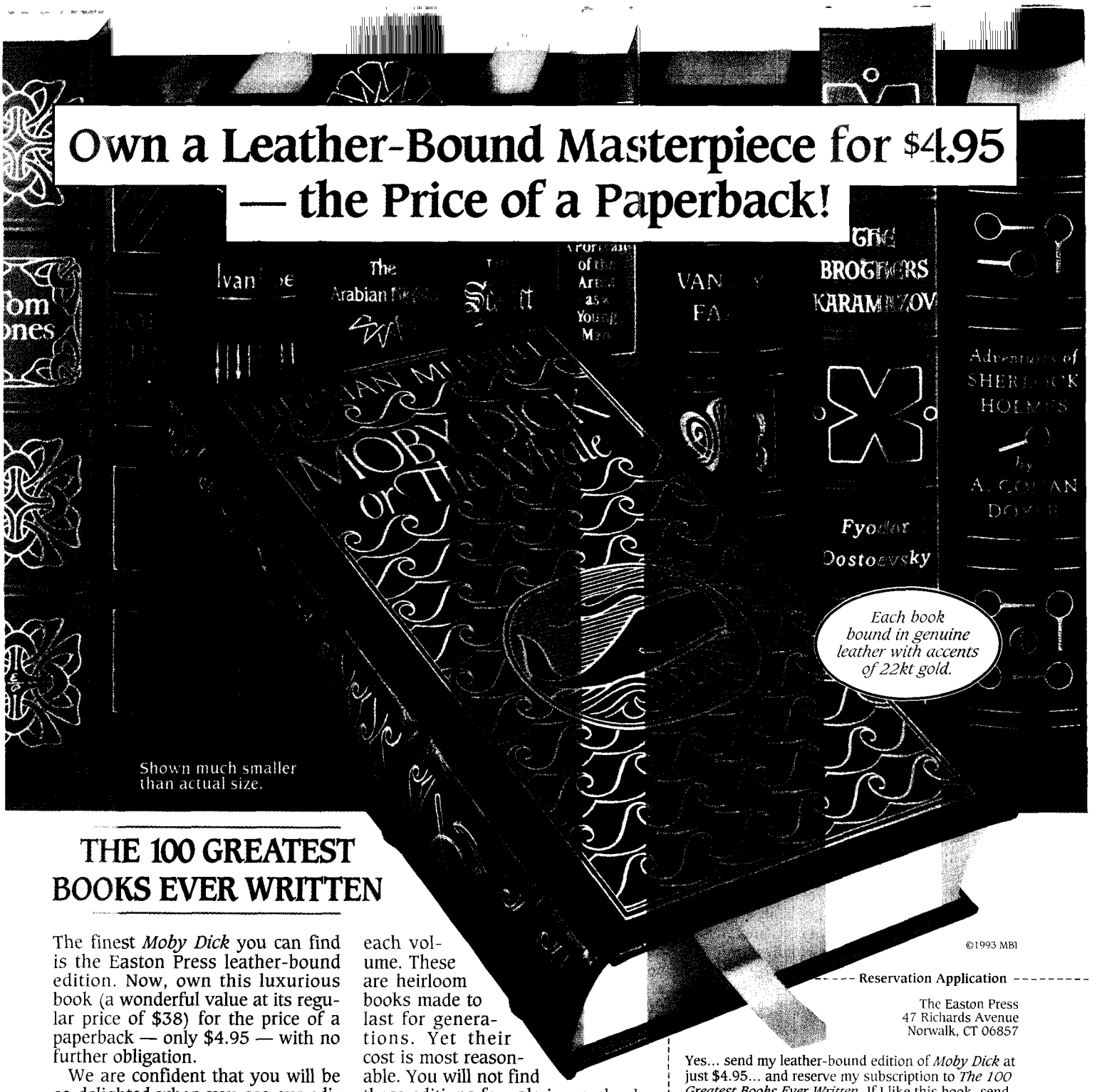
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Whatever actually happens with Bosnia, the American political landscape features one auspicious sign for the future health of collective security. The debate over Desert Storm was largely a cold war flashback—leftists reluctant to use force and right-wingers more gung ho. On the Bosnia question, cold war doves have joined cold war hawks in calling for intervention. (No one has been more militant than archetypal liberal Anthony Lewis.) Some have seen this as the beginning of a durable post-cold war coalition of centrist internationalists.

This label conceals some differences. Cold war doves, for example, may tend to support intervention for humanitarian reasons, while cold war hawks (in their heart of hearts) are driven more by law-and-order concerns—the fear of spreading chaos. Still, both employ both rationales. And anyway, it's a package deal. Every threat of spreading chaos threatens innocents, if sometimes less grotesquely than in Bosnia.

Of course, right-wing isolationism may again become a force. And on the left, various factors, including protectionism, could conceivably dampen the internationalist impulse. But it is not beyond the pale to think that extremes on the left and right will be manageably small, and that we're seeing a political realignment that could give collective security its sine qua non: firm American backing.

Few in this inchoate centrist coalition would insist on using the Security Council as a medium for every intervention. But just about everyone agrees that U.N. support is very nice if you can get it. Including presidents. In addition to spreading the burden, muting international opposition and optimally nourishing the doctrine of collective security, U.N. sanction can provide domestic political cover for a U.S. leader should the operation go awry.

Certainly Bush's strong preference, now that he's taking Bosnia more seriously, has been to get the U.N. on board before acting. And we can assume that the man who invaded a country to arrest a drug dealer is hesitating for practical reasons, not out of slavish devotion to international etiquette. These practical reasons are the grounds for hope that collective security can become a

Unconventional Force

Perhaps "Somalian intervention" is destined to become as proverbial as a Carthagenian peace or a Pyrrhic victory. No doubt to deflect rising criticism of our pusillanimous inactivity in the face of the Bosnian massacres, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin Powell, actually offered to intervene in Somalia—subject, of course, to his standard demands for maximum forces up front, to be used to achieve only the most circumscribed goals. By such means, all the normal risks and vicissitudes of war can be virtually eliminated. The (very) high-cost/modest-payoff intervention formula that we first saw applied in the Gulf war, when abundant ground forces were gathered over many months to finally advance very little, has now reached its apotheosis in Somalia.

First, send in an expeditionary force of Marine amphibious forces, which are so elaborately equipped with landing gear and inappropriate heavy weapons that they field the smallest possible number of rifle-carrying troops, at the highest possible cost. Second, instruct U.S. forces to advance with such caution that only a tiny fraction of the territory is secured, and even that at an agonizingly slow rate, precipitating "last-minute" looting sprees that can actually continue in rather leisurely fashion (until now, in fact). Third, to further reduce combat risks in this line-of-least-resistance intervention, specifically direct U.S. troops *not* to disarm the murderous gangs of Somali kleptocrats, even when their weapons are in plain sight, or their weapon stores are in known locations (one lot was actually confiscated, only to be returned by orders of the on-scene Marine commander). Finally, to avoid confrontations with the more organized Somali gangs, while tacitly opposing proposals for a U.N. trusteeship (the *only* lasting solution, but one that would require a lengthier U.S. deployment), respectfully recognize and negotiate with the murderously kleptocratic leaders, instead of putting them up against the nearest wall to shoot the lot of them.

Such are the ingredients of an (almost) zero-casualty intervention, which is evidently what the nation wants, judging by the absence of criticism, let alone ridicule (except during that initial moment when the Marines' precursors emerged from the waves in commando blackface, to conquer a beach already firmly held by T.V. crews). Had U.S. troops spread out to cover much more ground more rapidly, had they scattered the gangs, seized their weapon stores, and rounded up their leaders, there would certainly have been fighting, with American dead and wounded. But the use of force would then have achieved at least some substantive result: a reduction in Somalia's politicized criminality, or criminal politics as the case might be, giving that much more of a chance to the rest of the population.

As it is, the Somalian intervention is achieving almost nothing of lasting value at very considerable cost—more than $700 million and probably as much as $1 billion, as of this writing. True, starving children are temporarily being fed—but because of all that is not being done, that only gives them a chance to grow up into *khat*-chewing teenage gunmen, or their victims.

In theory, the United States has the military capabilities and troop levels to intervene in Bosnia-Herzegovina, so as to finally end its agony, *and* to deter Serbian ethnic aggression in the Sanjak of Novibazaar (within Serbia proper, but heavily Muslim) as well as in Kosovo and against Macedonia (in cahoots with the Greeks); *and* to rescue Liberia both from its own warring factions and the West African "peacekeeping" forces that now squat there, stealing a few chickens now and then; *and* to stop by main force the Angola internal war, for which the United States actually has some genuine moral responsibilities, as the former patron and armorer of Savimbi, who was willing to try elections but promptly took up arms when he lost; *and* to finally bring to an end the carnage in Sudan, the sufferings of Mozambique, and the depredations of Zaire.

In practice, the United States will not act at all, or it will only stage

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living doctrine. Bold visions are nice, but they're worthless unless they mesh with the perceived self-interest of politicians. And every successful use of the Security Council, however self-serving, gives the council strength, making future use more attractive.

The Carter legacy under which the Clinton foreign policy is said to labor contains some ingredients that could help foster collective security: more respect for international law than Bush had, for example, and a vaguely multilateralist disposition. And the new administration seems to harbor a healthy tolerance for intervention (on the part of, for example, the nominees for national security adviser and defense secretary, Anthony Lake and Les Aspin) as well as a desire to cut the Pentagon budget—two impulses that are irreconcilable unless we think multilaterally. James Woolsey, the incoming CIA director, was a principal author of a recent United Nations Association report that called for a standing U.N. military capability and endorsed collective security (though a more nuanced version of it than the austere and skeletal one presented here). And what of the much maligned Warren Christopher? His detractors claim he's a chameleon. Against this backdrop, that would be fine.

Of course, collective security is just like every other foreign policy: fraught with peril. A single miscalibrated intervention could lead to unacceptably heavy casualties among U.N. forces or to a wider war, either of which would complicate the doctrine's further use. And even with deft American guidance, the doctrine could fall prey to Security Council gridlock. The U.N.'s recent renaissance depends on the fragile fact that neither Russia nor China has used its veto to spoil the plans of the council's other three permanent members. Russia's foreign policy could change channels on short notice. So could China's, especially if Clinton's presidential rhetoric on human rights matches his campaign rhetoric. (Thus a looming clash between two liberal internationalist ideals: agitating for human rights and seeking multilateral cooperation.) All of the U.N. bonhomie that's been accumulating over the last couple of years could evaporate overnight.

"Somalian interventions," i.e., ineffectual visitations by the world's most expensive forces.

That is why in a world that seems set to require many more interventions (especially in Africa, where the last vestiges of colonial order are breaking down), it is not just the usual cohort of U.N. lovers who should press for the establishment of a professional standing army for the U.N., but also every hard-headed U.S. taxpayer. The Joint Chiefs now threaten to establish an expeditionary command specifically structured to provide U.S. forces for U.N. service. That should be firmly resisted. Under their current safer-in-combat-than-at-home operating doctrine, U.S. intervention forces would be much too costly for what little they would be allowed to achieve.

Much better to have the U.N. acquire its own army, or at least an elite force of reasonable size that could serve as a Foreign Legion for the world. Instead of the present system—under which so-called U.N. forces are actually good, bad or indifferent national contingents supplied by member nations, usually under strict no-casualty rules that guarantee their uselessness in most cases—a U.N. Legion would recruit *individual* volunteers, whose nationality would be irrelevant, for no politician would have to answer for their fate. With that, the U.N. could have real military strength at its command, i.e., forces that can be exposed to combat, instead of today's uniformed referees that Serbian or Somali gunmen can push around at will.

The French Foreign Legion proves that the unit cohesion that any effective combat force must have can be generated without a common nationality, let alone patriotism. The normal rituals of troop training are quite enough to inspire intense pride and a strong sense of solidarity, so long as they are sufficiently demanding and professional, as befits an elite infantry force (the useless mouths that fill the manpower rolls of U.N. agencies can be kept out by requiring all officers and men to parachute at regular intervals).

Certainly a U.N. Legion should have no trouble in attracting recruits. The armies of the world are filled with time-servers who are in it for the job security and the pensions, but each also has a percentage of genuine would-be fighters. And among populations at large, there is a certain small percentage of men (and sometimes women) who are natural-born warriors, but who stay away from the armed forces of their countries because they offer such slight chances of seeing any action. Just because a U.N. Legion would offer far more frequent opportunities for combat than any national army can, it would attract volunteers aplenty. Initially, a U.N. Legion might begin as a not-so-small force of, say, 10,000 combat-ready infantry. But if successful, that division's worth of troops could become the core of U.N. armed forces, complete with armored, air and naval units.

Nor would it be difficult to guarantee against the misuse of the U.N.'s military power. The most logical sequence would require a decision by the U.N. Security Council (in which the United States has a veto), with the endorsement of a majority of all member states in General Assembly. Detailed supervision would be provided by the Secretary General, within Security Council guidelines that could be changed as needed. As for the Legion's actual military command, the unwarlike bureaucratic types who have headed U.N. forces till now, inoffensive generals from inoffensive countries, would obviously be most unsuitable. But an effective U.N. officer corps would emerge soon enough quite, assuming frequent interventions: combat is a great selector.

True, even at an official 10,000 soldier level a U.N. Legion would not be cheap. For one thing, its equipment and day-to-day logistics would have to be provided by an appropriate U.N. agency—i.e., a bureaucracy consisting of U.N. officials, which virtually guarantees waste, mismanagement and probable fraud. Yet for U.S. taxpayers, who would only have to foot about one-quarter of the bill, a U.N. Legion would still be a great bargain as compared with U.S. military forces of maximum cost and minimum availability for combat.

EDWARD LUTTWAK

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This prospect is sometimes cited as evidence that collective security is a chimera. But obviously if the Security Council becomes unwilling to enforce the U.N. Charter, it will be time to seek other vehicles of collective security. We may, for example, look to such regional organizations as the E.C., the CSCE or the OAS—although, as yet, they haven't warmed up to their possible post-cold war roles. We may even reconceive the role of NATO. For that matter, even with a fairly active Security Council, regional organizations can be valid vehicles for collective security. Some institutional improvisation will be needed to apply the doctrine with reasonable consistency. Even the *occasional* use of ad hoc multilateral coalitions is acceptable, so long as collective security is plainly served and other means have been exhausted. (And of course, if at any point a truly vital American interest is threatened, and multilateral support is lacking, we'll have to do what we think is necessary.)

If collective security doesn't work, it doesn't work. But if it does work, its superiority to the alternatives is immense. And we'll never know if it works until we have a president who takes it seriously. Bill Clinton has used the words "collective security," but vaguely. If he clearly explained the doctrine, clearly committed the United States to pursue it and challenged other Security Council members to affirm their commitment, the effect on would-be aggressors could be considerable. Well-chosen words can have global power, a fact that is easy to forget in the wake of the Bush administration.

In fact, a few of history's finer examples of political oratory have come in support of collective security. Not coincidentally, they have tended to come during or right after world wars. Thanks to the cold war, most of us, including Clinton, can't remember such a conflagration. But the cold war is over, and it might be a good idea to reflect on world wars, and to get a little scared. Fear is a good source of resolve, and collective security is not a doctrine for the squeamish. But it is, I believe, a doctrine for the humane, and even for the prudent. •

Refocusing the laser.

AMERICA'S BURDEN

By Patrick Glynn

When Bill Clinton enters the Oval Office, the list of foreign policy problems facing the United States will be daunting. Yet the resources and will for coping with such problems have rarely been at a lower point. The country remains in the grip of a fiscal crisis that would seem to preclude costly new domestic programs, let alone foreign initiatives. In addition, U.S. military power is rapidly declining. Since 1989 the defense budget has dropped by nearly 20 percent, and more than 150,000 military personnel have left active duty. Already many experts believe the United States incapable of repeating Desert Storm, at least in the same time frame. America is no longer the military power it was at the end of the cold war, and still deeper defense cuts are inevitable.

Meanwhile, the United States has floundered from problem to problem abroad, failing to devise a strategy remotely equal to the complexities of the post-cold war world. To be sure, America faces no threat comparable to that once posed by an aggressive Soviet Union. But significant potential dangers, from a Russian slide toward nationalism, to a wider conflict in the Balkans, to aggression by Iran, Syria or North Korea, loom.

Amid this turmoil—and the obvious constraints on U.S. resources—many are prepared to counsel a policy of disengagement based on narrow national interests. Indeed, America already seems poised to repeat the errors of the 1920s and '30s, when failure to match far-flung interests with sufficient military resources and a coherent policy during an era of relative peace helped pave the way for a world war.

Equally dangerous, however, would be a policy of endless, poorly explained interventions, which would spur an isolationist reaction, inviting defeat and undermining American prestige. More than once in this century, Congress has spurned foreign involvements understood by the executive to be vital—as in its rejection of Woodrow Wilson's League of Nations in 1919 or its abrupt cutoff of military aid to beleaguered South Vietnam in 1975. In marrying interventionist rhetoric with a promise to focus on domestic matters, Bill Clinton could easily find himself repeating old mistakes: he should keep in mind the example of the domestically minded LBJ, whose failure to clarify and give priority to a major intervention was one reason for our failure in Vietnam.

PATRICK GLYNN is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

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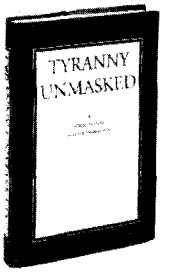

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What we need, in effect, are new rules of engagement that suggest where we must be involved and where we can safely afford to stand aside. The task facing the United States in the post-cold war era is essentially to deter emerging foreign threats and to shore up the failing cold war alliances. Such a policy requires five components: (1) regional deterrence through continued forward basing of U.S. forces (and, given the growing missile danger, some missile defenses); (2) cultivation of Western unity and cooperation; (3) preventive diplomacy, designed to address regional threats before they spread; (4) institutional reorganization of both the U.S. government and our alliance system; and (5) targeted aid and investment abroad. What follows is a look at several trouble spots and how the new president should deal with them.

The linchpin of the new world remains Russia, whose fate and progress toward democracy are crucial to the future of the international order. Russia alone maintains the physical capability to destroy the United States. It also has the power to form inimical alliances—as, for example, with Serbia—to deadlock the U.N. Security Council, to proliferate weapons of mass destruction and to wage (potentially nuclear) war with its neighbors. Russia has been in the throes of a major economic crisis, and thus far the West has done little to help. As a result, the Yeltsin government has moved to the right, sales of weapons abroad are increasing and Yeltsin has signed an agreement to transfer advanced military technology to totalitarian China. Western aid to Russia since the August 1991 coup has totaled no more than a few billion dollars in credits, of which the United States has supplied only a small portion. Something on the order of the Marshall Plan—combining direct aid with government guarantees of Western private investment—needs to be organized with the cooperation of Japan, Germany and the other G-7 states. Similar provisions should be made for post-Soviet states, especially economically hard-pressed Ukraine, whose huge arms industry is already becoming a source of dangerous proliferation. In 1947 the United States devoted more than 2.5 percent of its GNP to the reconstruction of Europe—a gesture that paid enormous dividends in stability. A couple of hundred dollars per American family would be a small price to pay to prevent a return to the cold war.

The Mideast, because of its oil wealth, remains the one region on earth where high-tech weaponry can combine explosively with hostile attitudes. Ensuring the flow of oil from the Gulf has long been a vital U.S. interest; to this is now added the problem of countering the flow of advanced weapons to hostile regimes. In 1990-91 Iran allocated some $4 billion to the purchase of advanced weapons. In 1992 China agreed to provide Iran with its first nuclear power plant. Moreover, Iran is seeking to increase strategic cooperation with Syria, which is also busy acquiring new weapons from Communist and former Communist states. Both boast significant arsenals of medium-range missiles. At the same time, the appeal of Islamic fundamentalism is growing, as Iran stirs trouble against pro-Western governments in Egypt and Saudi Arabia and seeks to extend its influence into Islamic sectors of the former Soviet Union. Bill Clinton's first priority will be to contain Saddam Hussein's Iraq, sheltering the Kurds in the north and maintaining the no-fly zone in the south in the face of Saddam's defiance. But the ambitions of Iran and Syria cannot be overlooked.

To deter war in the Mideast, the United States must first recover the clear capacity to repeat, if necessary, large-scale distant operations on the order of Desert Shield/Desert Storm. Second, it should be moving quickly to develop missile defenses—both tactical defenses to protect troops and limited, land-based strategic defenses to hedge against the acquisition of an ICBM by a hostile Mideast state. Third, to protect moderate governments and preserve an appearance of even-handedness, the United States must press the Arab-Israeli peace process forward, but without inadvertently weakening Israel, which, whatever its other faults or virtues, remains the West's cop on the beat.

During the campaign, Bill Clinton took a categorical position on China—favoring denial of most favored nation status—from which he will probably be forced to retreat. The Chinese leadership is despicable, both in its human rights practices and in its record of weapons proliferation. But the Western-orientated powers in the region fear driving Beijing into a corner and favor instead a dual track policy, combining deterrence with a measure of détente and promotion of economic development. The hope is that when the 88-year-old Deng Xiaoping expires, economics may point a path away from communism, giving reform forces the upper hand in the inevitable succession struggle. China's propensities for aggression should not be underestimated: it routinely threatens Taiwan and has expressed designs on the South China Sea. As long as the United States maintains a significant presence in the Pacific, such aggression is unlikely. But any significant reduction of that presence as part of military cuts could weaken deterrence. A war in the Pacific region, where we carry on massive trade and U.S. companies have invested some $60 billion, could mean a major economic setback for the United States.

The other potential threat to the Pacific lies in the North Korean bomb program. The intention to produce an atomic weapon is clearly present; whether the North Koreans possess the technical proficiency to do so remains in dispute. In effect, the situation on the Korean peninsula can be characterized as a race: Which will happen first, the death of the 80-year-old North Korean dictator Kim Il Sung or the production of a North Korean bomb? The situation underlines the need for a continued strong U.S. military presence in South Korea and in the Pacific at large.

Perhaps the first international crisis Clinton will confront flows from Serbia's war in the Balkans. Because of the possibility of a widened war, he must act with dispatch. The outlines of an alternative policy have long been clear: arms to the Bosnians, enforcement of the no-fly zone, air attacks on Serbian guns and tanks in Bosnia and the credible threat of air attacks on military targets within Serbia. The objectives of such a policy would be

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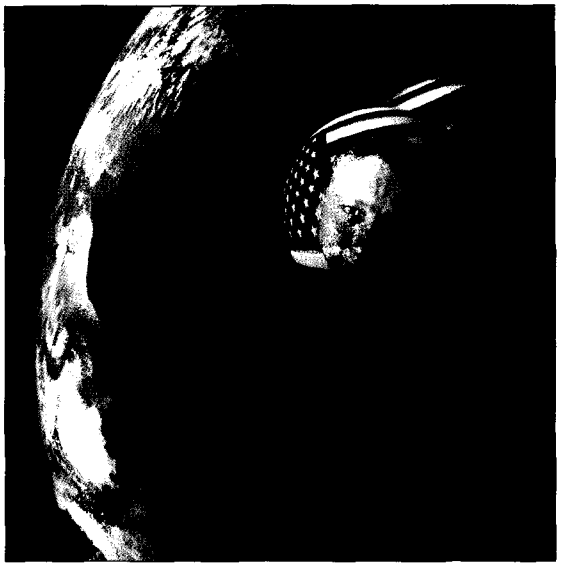
clear: to demonstrate the West's intolerance of Serbia's aggression, to forestall a widened war and to create leverage for serious negotiations, a genuine cease-fire and insertion of U.N. peacekeepers throughout Bosnia. Thus far France and Britain have resisted action, but if Clinton makes Bosnia a high priority, there is little reason to doubt the Europeans will fall in line.

Action in Bosnia should be the prelude to a more concerted effort to create a security structure for the rest of Eastern Europe. Here too there is need for more Western aid and investment, but regardless of what it does on the economic front, the United States can make a contribution to security. The former Warsaw Pact states have gained loose, associate membership in NATO. But democratic governments would be strengthened if the continuing sense of insecurity in the region could be defused. Tensions exist between Slovakia and Hungary and between Communist Romania and neighboring states. There's no need to station troops in Eastern Europe, but arms and NATO air support could be supplied in the event of attack by non-democratic forces.



BY JIM HOLLOWAY FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

At the same time the United States acts to deter regional aggressors, it must labor to refurbish the alliance structure that guaranteed stability throughout the cold war. One of the great dangers facing the world in the post-cold war era, as in the 1920s and '30s, is the factionalization of the West, based on cultural differences and a reversion to national policies based on narrow self-interest. In the three years since the collapse of the Berlin Wall there has been a marked deterioration in our relations with Western Europe and, to a far more dramatic extent, Japan. Rectifying these problems will require far more initiative and imagination than the Bush administration has shown.

In Western Europe the central problem is not Germany, but France. Obsessed with its declining status as a great power and deeply envious of the United States, Germany and Japan, France has used the years since the end of the cold war chiefly to magnify its own status. Playing on German war-guilt and anxieties over unification, it has striven to construct a new fortress Europa—the E.C.—over which, by virtue of its nuclear arsenal and its control of the E.C.'s Brussels bureaucracy, it could politically preside. In the process, it has driven Europe in precisely the wrong direction.

Today the historical task of Western Europe is to stabilize and assimilate Eastern Europe. Instead, France has worked to transform Western Europe into an ever more exclusive club. In this it has enjoyed the backing of Germany. Bush, meanwhile, has allowed his friendship with French President François Mitterrand to blind him to the cool tenor of the French toward the United States.

The United States, which largely stood aside as Europe raced toward unity in 1991, needs to shape a new policy designed to isolate and limit the influence of France and to promote opening of Europe both to the East and West. Its priority should be its relations with Germany (whose interests are clearly in a stable East) and Britain (long America's most dependable European friend).

As rancorous as it sometimes is, the U.S.-Japanese relationship remains central to stability in Asia. Though stalwartly resisting the United States on trade, the Japanese have proved extraordinarily cooperative on security matters. Today Japan spends $2.5 billion annually for maintenance of the 45,000 U.S. troops on its soil. True, the Japanese benefit economically from American security guarantees—limiting their defense spending to just over 1 percent of GNP. But the alternative would be unilateral Japanese buildup, with potentially destabilizing consequences. Japan has not yet been accorded the prestige or responsibility for international decision-making commensurate with its economic power. The Japanese were infuriated by American behavior during the Gulf war, where, in Tokyo's view, Washington made unilateral decisions and consulted Japan only when funds were needed to implement them. The best formula for relations with Tokyo has long been clear: a combination of toughness on trade and accommodation on political matters. History demonstrates the folly of attempting to hold down a rising power. Japan, like Germany, should be admitted to the Security Council and treated as a full partner.

The longest era of peace in Europe, before the tense peace of the cold war, was guaranteed by a concert of great powers. The closest equivalent today is the G-7, or the club of leading industrial states. This club's agenda should be expanded to include a full range of political and security issues. The U.N. was intended to do this job, but the presence of Boutros Boutros-Ghali, a general secretary narrowly committed to helping Africa and the Third World, limits the utility of that organization. It also helps explain how the United States ended up in Somalia, a place of great suffering but one in which no geopolitical issue of importance is at stake.

Such an agenda may seem overwhelming, and domestic problems may appear more pressing. But domestic achievements can quickly be eclipsed by a badly handled war or an international crisis. When Bill Clinton talks of focusing "like a laser" on domestic policy, he should keep in mind that virtually every president since World War II has been judged by history primarily on his success or failure in foreign affairs. •

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Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Facsimiles

All of us right-minded people have spent the last year or so feeling sorry for Robert Downey Jr. What worse fate could slug an actor than being chosen to play Charles Chaplin? Mario Lanza in *The Great Caruso* at least had something of a tenor voice. Vanessa Redgrave in *Isadora* had to do some sleight of hand—and foot—to replicate Duncan's dancing; still, Redgrave is herself a considerable artist and could create the penumbra of genius. But Downey! This wispy actor of no particular flavor might do well with Chaplin's "life" scenes, but what about the inevitable scenes when he would have to do bits from Chaplin films?

So much for right-mindedness. It turns out that in **Chaplin** (TriStar) Downey mimics Chaplin's pantomime and music-hall agility very impressively; it's in the biographical sections, which predominate, that he is dull. This may be only to say that Chaplin was more interesting as artist than as man: and also that the screenplay by William Boyd and Bryan Forbes and William Goldman is a shoddy patchwork. Still, to those patches Downey brings little—and is little helped by the director, Richard Attenborough.

The life is synopsized in such a hard-breathing way that, with the exception of Chaplin's mother, the women in it are stripped of characterization; and the major points in his career seem only reminders for those who already know the story. Even so, there are distortions and omissions. Why does Chaplin get the telegram offering him his first film job in Butte, Montana, and not in Philadelphia—where it really happened? Why did they send him the offer in the first place? (Accounts vary about who had "discovered" him in his vaudeville tours; the screenplay chooses none of those accounts.) Why is Chaplin's half-brother Sydney shown only as Charlie's manager? Sydney did manage him for about ten years, but before and after that period, Sydney was himself a successful performer. And what is the basis for building up J. Edgar Hoover as Chaplin's nemesis? The screenplay is derived from Chaplin's autobiography and David Robinson's biography. The former mentions Hoover once, in connection with a non-political matter, and the latter mentions him not at all.

Last straw: the film omits a wonderful moment that the whole world witnessed. In 1972 Chaplin returned to Hollywood to receive a special award at the Oscar ceremonies. Before he appeared, the audience, including the television audience, saw a collection of Chaplin clips that ended with the finish of *The Circus*. With that last image, the T.V. director cross-faded to Chaplin himself, in dinner jacket, gray-haired, tremulous, coming slowly out on stage as the entire audience in that huge theater rose to its feet and shouted. The film ends with Chaplin in the wings waiting to come on; it omits his entrance. *Where is that wonderful moment, Richard Attenborough?*

Chaplin adds to the current string of bio pics, along with *Malcolm X* and *Hoffa*. (Things these days are just one darned life after another.) Speaking of which, I went to *Hoffa* again and am very glad of it. My enthusiasm for Danny DeVito's directing and Jack Nicholson's acting is even higher now. A few of the synapses are a bit thin. For instance, President Nixon's involvement in the commutation of Hoffa's prison sentence—for Nixon's political advantage—is scantily sketched. (We can just about catch Nixon's name over an airplane's roar.) But Nicholson towers sufficiently to lift the film along with him.

He is also visible in **A Few Good Men** (Columbia), made from a Broadway play about a U.S. Marine Corps court-martial. Nicholson plays a hard-nosed, orthodox colonel. He certainly does not walk through the part; but a man of his talent with a lesser conscience could have done so.

Because of different positions in the plot, Nicholson works in the shadow of Tom Cruise, as a naval lawyer. Cruise is quick, energetic, intelligent. (If only the director, Rob Reiner, had advised him not to use his arms like semaphores in a drunk scene.)

Of course we know that the trial will—must—end differently from the way it seems to be going. What we wait for is the seeming debacle just before the end, followed by the obligatory "save." Everything falls into place, click click click. Like many a formulaic piece, this one engages a real theme—here it's the conflict between the concept of duty and the idea of the individual—and does little with it.

A special nod to Robert Richardson, the cinematographer who did *JFK*, for making this picture as snappy and crisp

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Hoffa. *Jack Nicholson's sheer acting brawn is tremendous. Danny DeVito directs—and acts—impressively. David Mamet's screenplay captures much, if not all, of Hoffa's complexity. A disturbingly American work. (1/18/93)* **Intervista.** *That charming old conjurer, Federico Fellini, makes a wistful enchantment out of a visit to his studio by Japanese interviewers. (12/7/92)* **Malcolm X.** *Enough of his life to explain, vividly, his reputation. Spike Lee directs and Denzel Washington acts with recurrent, though not constant, fire. (12/21/92)* **The Muppet Christmas Carol.** *You need to be a Muppet and a Michael Caine enthusiast to relish this version of Dickens. But that's hardly an exclusive club. (1/4&11/93)* **—SK**

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as befits a film full of snappy salutes.

Another item in the current vogue of Facile Reversals. In this subgenre, a film takes a stock character and stands him on his moral head. (The protagonist of *Unforgiven*, for instance, who is supposedly profound just because he is a killer-for-hire instead of a conventional Western hero.) **Scent of a Woman** (Universal) up-ends the poignantly appealing blind hero (*The Enchanted Cottage, Wings in the Dark, Butterflies Are Free*) and makes him an abrasive vulgarian. More: though he is a retired lieutenant colonel, his blindness is the result not of military action but of a drunken accident.

What else could our supposedly undeceived age ask for? Al Pacino in the role. After the subtlety, the very musicality of his performance in *Glengarry Glen Ross*, Pacino comes down on this part like several tons of bricks, making the rebarbative most of its sophomoric antisentimentality.

Bo Goldman's screenplay is a compound of now-obligatory frankness (Pacino's sexual comments at a family Christmas dinner) and the mustiest kind of old-fashioned hokum (the finale at a boys' school). Undeceived ones, take it away. •

Mark Stevens on Art

Fear of Flaying

A dominant style often blinds with its own light. As people stare toward the same artists and patch of sensibility they fail to see other possibilities for art. That blindness is the hope of young artists: there remains overlooked territory to explore. Because Eva Hesse died so young, of a brain tumor at the age of 34 in 1970, her sculpture seems to highlight that early, eruptive moment when an artist discovers that not everything has been said. Her work has the exhilarating urgency of someone revealing the overlooked, of one who blows the cover of a reigning style.

Minimal and conceptual art, in the case of Hesse, were the reigning styles. Although she had gone to art school in the late 1950s during the heyday of abstract expressionism and shown a particular feeling for the warm painting of de Kooning, she mainly had to contend with the cooler outlook that supplanted abstract expressionism during the 1960s. Her milieu was that of the minimalists, and she absorbed their ideas and formal vocabulary; Sol LeWitt was an important mentor. But Hesse was not an originator of the style and, more important, she was probably by nature uncomfortable with the deductive clarity of its best-known practitioners.

Instead, Hesse developed an aggressively emotional style in which the inner life seems to burst free—ungainly, startling, like a puppet in a jack-in-the-box—from the best-laid plans of art. Hesse herself had a difficult personal life; her mother committed suicide and she suffered through a divorce. But the feeling in her sculpture never seems diminished by autobiography; it avoids the obviously confessional while still making the viewer confront the misshapen desires of the heart. There is an important and witty work called *Hang Up* (1966) that sets the tone for much of her strongest sculpture. A steel tube spews outward in a long loop from the edge of an empty rectangle hung on the wall—invading the detached sanctity of the viewer's space.

Hesse's allegiance to the awkwardly human was there from the start. The retrospective of her work, which was organized by the Yale University Art Gallery and then went to the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, showed some early painting that already seemed insistently personal. Later, when she joined many of her peers in using industrial materials, she never yielded the messy physicality of the human animal to a clean machined surface. She was attracted to materials like latex and fiberglass that, while they retained an industrial character, also resembled dried human skin—orangey-yellow, translucent, almost lyrically repellent.

The physical, in Hesse, was always the felt. Because her work seemed so much like skin, very nearly alive, it challenged the abstract authority of notions like "surface," which once appealed to minimalists, critics and engineers. That was partly what made her art disturbing: she insisted on establishing an intimate relationship between the mechanically abstract and the human. I visited the exhibit with a friend who said that *Sans II* (1968), a luminous series of open

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fiberglass and polyester resin boxes, reminded him of the human lampshades he had once seen. Hesse's work did not directly refer to such things, but her evocation of naked skin and industrial methods manifested a deep and unconscious fear in contemporary culture—namely, that we were yielding our bodies not to the hand of nature but to chemicals, machines and processes we could not control.

In Hesse, touch is vital, and fraught with the fear of flaying. Her fiberglass and polyester resin pieces have a gleam like that of hardened secretions on human vellum. Contamination and decay are also part of the work's natural life; the sections of *Sans II*, having been exposed to various levels of light over the years, have aged differently. The relations between inner and outer are often painful; if some pieces are an assertive push outward, a kind of liberation, others show a concern with hollowing out. And inner can mean innards. The twisted cords hanging from four rough rectangles in *Untitled* (1970) resemble intestines. Hesse's work is full of carapaces, shucked skins, implied transformations—without much faith in the butterfly of resurrection.

If Hesse put a human stamp on the impersonal materials of minimalism, she did something similar to its favorite formal device. The grid has regularly served the strict utopian temperaments of modernity, both the engineer-artists who (as at the Bauhaus) insisted on modeling art after the machine age and the cleric-artists (like Mondrian or Rothko) who sought to define a modern spiritual geometry. Many minimalists were no less stern, behaving as if the evolution of art history required them to use the grid. Hesse was not a materialist, a metaphysician or a historian. The grid became, in her work, a personal matter.

She subverts the grid's abstract authority in many different ways. As early as 1958 (around the time when she was studying at Yale with that great square, Josef Albers) she made a work called *Leaf Study*, in which a branch with leaves—a beautiful serial form—is messed about by gouache and the dirt and decay of nature. Ten years later she used graph paper to make *lyrical* drawings. In one such work, she created a rectangle by drawing thousands of minuscule Xs inside the tiny graph paper boxes. She employed varying amounts of ink to form each X, so that the mathematical field looks random, spontaneous, shimmering. In another drawing, she formed a square that contains a Malevich-style cross. The square itself is not centered on the paper and is made by circles in the tiny boxes, itself a witty subversion. The cross stands out because she drew its circles with less ink.

Hesse often seduced the intellectual grid with sexual imagery. Not much about sex is rational, orderly or clean, and Hesse had a genius for evoking the gangly and near-comic bulges, bumps, protrusions and unexpected sprawlings of the body. This is where her humor and kindness show, for her work seems more tolerant than cruel. Only rarely is the imagery precisely male or female; this universality helps her avoid the merely partisan. What's phallic, for example, can also be breastlike. *Addendum* (1967) is a horizontal series of seventeen big round bumps on the wall; from each bump dangles a cord that curls sloppily onto the floor.

Yet the grid can also be ominous, evocative of entrapment. *Accession II* (1969) is a freestanding open box, its exterior made of galvanized steel and consisting of hundreds of tidy points in rows. Each point caps a piece of vinyl tubing that's visible in the interior. If the outside is hard, metallic and imprisoning, the interior is a near riot of spiky plastic tubes that, as Anna Chave suggests in the catalog, "may evince the myth of the vagina dentata with its treacherous mouthful of teeth." That interior also has a kind of enveloping seaweed softness, which is as suffocating in its way as the march of exterior points.

In the final room of the Hirshhorn installation, two of Hesse's late pieces are juxtaposed, each a delicate gathering of ropelike forms hanging in the air. Neither relies on a grid or on any strict compositional device. In fact, the grid seems to have collapsed; or it has been lost to the elements, the way wind and rain take apart a spider's web. Both pieces almost cry out to be touched. Yet they are remarkably different. The fiberglass cord of *Right After* (1969) is airy, diaphanous. The latex-covered rope of *Untitled* (1970) appears heavy, borne downward toward the earth. If the one is unusually lyrical—a drawing in light—the other is dark with decay, brooding and claustrophobic, as if made by one of Miss Havisham's spiders. The duality is characteristic. Heaven and hell seem, if not inseparable, within touching distance.

Hesse's was obviously a lonely and painful life, of great interest to feminist critics. But she also had good friends—which is worth stressing, I think, before discussing her canonical importance. In 1965 LeWitt wrote the despairing artist a letter so deeply encouraging, so reassuring in its comic rhetorical crescendo, that it deserves to be quoted, if only because every young artist should have such a friend. Robert Storr calls it the "best letter that one contemporary artist has sent another." LeWitt wrote:

> You seem the same as always, and being you, hate every minute of it. Don't! Learn to say "Fuck You" to the world once in a while. You have every right to. Just stop thinking, worrying, looking over your shoulder, wondering, doubting, fearing, hurting, hoping for some easy way out, struggling, gasping, confusing, itching, scratching, mumbling, bumbling, grumbling, humbling, stumbling, rumbling, rambling, gambling, tumbling, scumbling, scrambling, hitching, hatching, bitching, moaning, groaning, honing, boning, horse-shitting, hair-splitting, nit-picking, piss-trickling, nose-sticking, ass-gouging, eyeball-poking, finger-pointing, alleyway-sneaking, long waiting, small stepping, evil-eying, back-scratching, searching, perching, besmirching, grinding grinding grinding away at yourself. Stop it and just DO.
>
> ... Don't worry about cool, make your own uncool. Make your own, your own world.... *You must practice being stupid, dumb, unthinking, empty.* Then you will be able to DO! I have much confidence in *you* and even though you are tormenting yourself, the work you do is very good. Try to do some BAD work. The worst you can think of and see what happens but mainly relax and let everything go to hell.

The shape of Hesse's life is unforgettable. That is now part of her importance. She was the child of German Jews who fled the Nazis. Her mother committed suicide. Her marriage shattered, partly over conflicts about her responsibilities as an artist and a wife. She was pretty, tormented by personal demons and confessed obsessively to a diary. She had the courage to make original work in a male-dominated world and died young from a wasting disease. Her unfinished life, like Sylvia Plath's, seems completed only by drawing a moral.

So it was inevitable that, over time, Hesse would join Frieda Kahlo as a symbol of the difficulties that face women artists. (Even her name has a certain archetypal sound: "Eve" followed by the hissing serpent sound of "Hesse.") In any case, our culture likes to use the figure of the artist to play out its wider quarrels, desires and insecurities. With the role of women unsettled, Hesse's life is a rich resource for constructing models and making arguments. And if she is put onto a pedestal, why worry too much about the elevation? When people argue, they always generalize to a fault.

Even so, regarding Hesse in those

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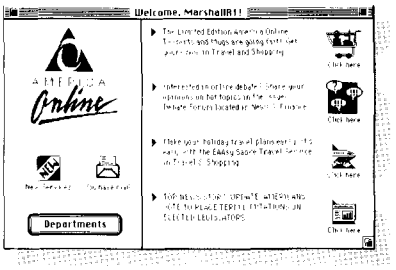

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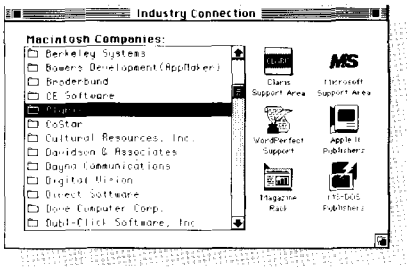

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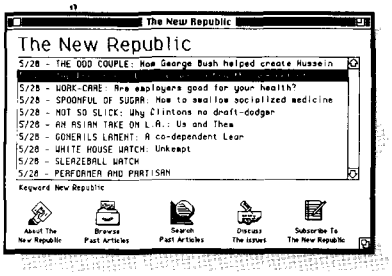
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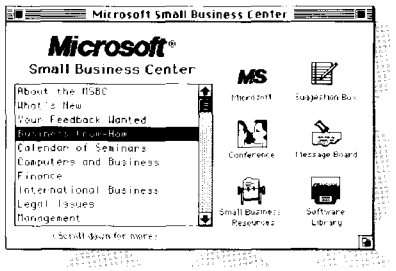

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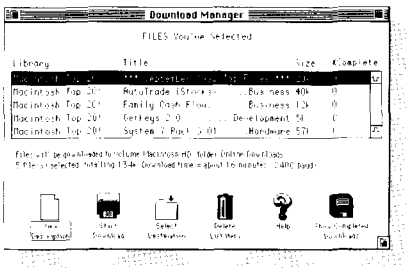

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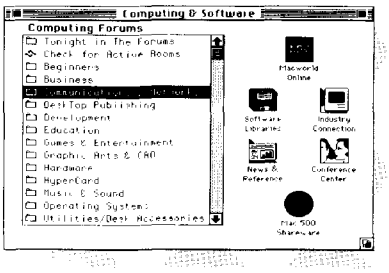

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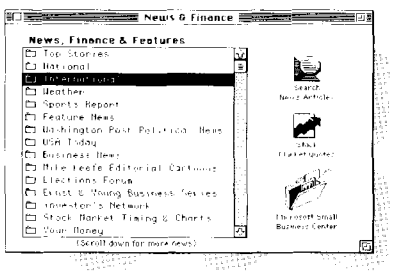

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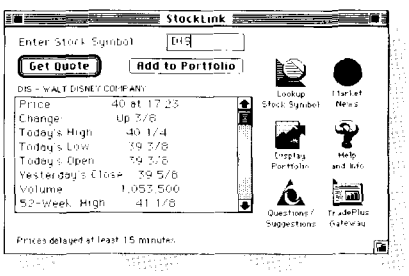

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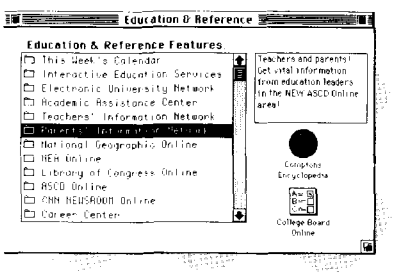

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terms is disappointing. Capping a life with a moral, it seems to me, nails the coffin shut. The irreducibly particular is what gives life to art and art to life; and generalizing can be cruel. For example, the catalog of the Yale show is admirable in many respects and not given to apotheosis; yet few writers on Hesse feel much compunction about making Hesse's husband, who was also an artist and is alive today, appear like a hard-hearted man insensitive to genius. Perhaps that's the case; but the conviction should come only after a thorough and complex reading of her life in which he, too, has a particular voice.

Does it matter that Hesse's art was made by a woman? Of course, but not in the obvious ways. Perhaps she rebelled against the conventions of a pretty femininity, had an intimate way with materials and felt uneasy with the cool angular form of the grid because it was a symbol of male authority. But these observations seem much too reductive—and unlike the way an artist thinks—to explain the power of her work. What is now called "gender analysis" can easily trivialize her achievement, turning her treatment of classical human themes into a kind of ghetto pleading.

And doesn't it sometimes seem a failure of taste, if nothing else, to generalize from the particular pain of an artist? Extremes of emotion, after all, are *not* typical. Sculpture like Hesse's is *not* usual. But gender analysis conveys the implication that they are representative. Turning Hesse into an ambassador for her sex dissipates her frightening individuality. It allows one to possess her work on the cheap, and can be a way to abstract what's painful, to make smooth what is truer rough. It is much easier to talk about women than about a woman.

Most good artists are male or female in mysterious, not easily explained ways. Women today make art that ranges from the traditionally masculine to the traditionally feminine while still conveying to the viewer that they are women. Eva Hesse and Agnes Martin each have a way of seducing the grid; yet the two artists could hardly be more different. How does that happen? Often we sense the woman in the artist, as we sense the man, for reasons that almost die in the telling. In Hesse, for example, there is sometimes a sensation of retiring shyness that requires its reverse—a shocking frontality. That sensation doesn't belong to women, but her inflection is feminine.

Pop and minimal art were often a matter of the bright impersonal surface and the smart intellectual pose. Hesse matters less because she was a woman, I think, than because she remembered what art was then forgetting. She was not alone in this. Her show proved yet again that the '60s and '70s were a deeper and more varied period than has generally been acknowledged in the art history chronologies. The moodiness of artists like Christopher Wilmarth, Richard Serra and Eva Hesse—even when using "minimal" elements—established an essential counterpoint to their time, a dark echo of its clear certainties. •

Nietzsche in Furs

BY LOUIS MENAND

Sex, Art, and American Culture by Camille Paglia

(Vintage, 337 pp., $13 paper)

Sex, Art, and American Culture is a collection of things written and said by Camille Paglia since the publication of her first book, *Sexual Personae: Art and Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson*, in 1990. It includes some consideration of sex, art, and American culture; but the chief subject of interest—as a large photograph of the author on the cover, a "Media History" of her renown, a collection of cartoons in which her name appears and a bibliography of press stories about her all suggest—is Camille Paglia. And why not? It's a phenomenon that presents a few challenges to the understanding.

Paglia's own account of her celebrity is frank, but it is not completely helpful. "What has happened is not my doing but that of the zeitgeist," she explains. "At the end of the century and millennium, the culture has suddenly changed. There is a hunger for new ways of seeing and thinking. Anti-establishment mavericks like me are back in fashion. It's a classically American story, the loner riding out of the desert to shoot up the saloon and run the rats out of town." Well, which is it? First she's just another surfer, then it turns out she's the whole wave. She is, as she puts it, a "maverick in fashion"; and although the paradox is probably unintended, it's as good a formulation as any other. Paglia is one of those people who are easy to pick out in a crowd because it is in a crowd that you are most likely to find them.

Paglia's own account of the genealogy of *Sexual Personae* is that publication was delayed for seven years while she searched for a publisher. If this is so, the timing was perfect; for the book arrived at the height of an academic sex mania. Sexuality and its representation have been, for the last ten years or so, a special interest of many professors who work in the humanities. Most of these people believe that sexual identity is socially and culturally constructed, that we derive our idea of what is "natural" from the way sexuality is represented in art and literature (and other "texts") and that these representations, in turn, reinforce sexual norms—from the notion that there is something transgressive about a woman smoking a cigar to the notion that there is something transgressive about a man sleeping with his mother. This connection between sexuality and imagery is the subject of *Sexual Personae*. Paglia could not have published a book on a trendier topic.

Paglia's claim is that she differs from other academic sexologists because she believes that sexual identities are rooted in nature—that there are biological differences between men and women that cannot be socialized out of existence. Other academics, she maintains, think that since sexual norms are only constructions, they can be "deconstructed" or reconstructed with a view to eliminating sexism, homophobia and other undesirable consequences of the idea that received sexual values are somehow "natural." Paglia regards this belief as a liberal fantasy.

Paglia's most concentrated critique of the constructionist position appears in a long review, published in an academic journal, of two books by specialists in gay studies. Not many people have read it; what has made her famous is her more widely diffused and less focused attack on contemporary feminism. "Feminists," she complains on the first page of *Sexual Personae*, "grossly oversimplify the problem of sex when they reduce it to a matter of social convention: readjust society, eliminate sexual inequality, purify sex roles, and happiness and harmony will reign." She has repeated the assertion in almost everything she has written.

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This argument is a red herring. It's true that some academics have gotten themselves so entangled in a boundless, weblike conception of "culture" that they cannot find their bearings sufficiently to utter even a logical sentence on the subject. Paglia quotes an example by "a feminist classicist" that pretty much takes the prize: "'Nature' and 'culture,' as culturally defined rather than natural concepts, are unstable, historically relative assumptions." But most of the business of "women's studies" is run precisely on the assumption that there *is* an essential difference between the sexes. People in that line of work generally share Paglia's view that sexual identity is neither completely constructed nor completely given, but arises out of the interaction of culture and nature.

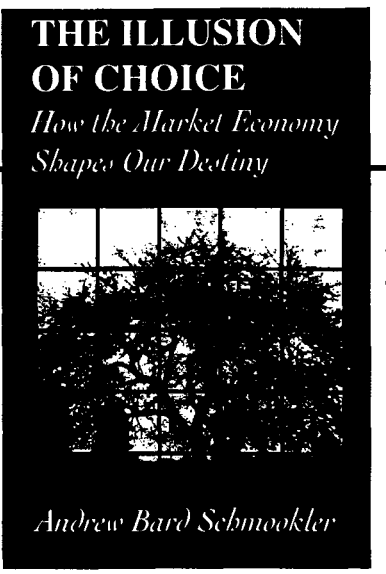
To this extent, Paglia is a constructionist herself. The whole argument of her book is that the great works of Western art and literature are efforts to escape biology through the creation of a fantastic variety of sexual personae. The book is not called *Sexual Essences*, after all. The issue that separates Paglia from her fellow sex-and-gender scholars isn't whether men and women have different biological destinies; it's what follows from the assumption that they do. Apart from this disagreement, Paglia's work—with its idealization of male homosexuality, its ceaseless vilification of white Anglo-Saxon Protestant culture, its many references to the author's own experiences as an ethnicked and gendered being and its general conviction that the supreme achievement of Western civilization is a man wearing a dress—is about as voguish as it comes.

The academic interest in sexuality belongs to the phenomenon known to its critics as "the politicization of the humanities"—the emphasis on the racial and sexual politics of art and literature. The reaction against "the politicization of the humanities" (that is, the politicization of "the politicization of the humanities") reached its media peak in the year *Sexual Personae* appeared; and it was on this stage, already built by other hands, that Paglia became a star. In a spate of op-ed essays, book reviews, interviews and television appearances (the sorts of things used to fill up the new book), she attacked academic feminists and "political correctness" types for puritanism and weak scholarship; she ridiculed contemporary critical theory; and she defended the glory and the grandeur of the Western tradition. She became, in effect, the scourge of her own trend.

Her timing was lucky in this role, too. The reaction against "the politicization of the humanities" took many forms. Some people argued that far from being racist and sexist, canonical works of art and literature are themselves subversive of traditional social norms; some people argued that teaching canonical art and literature is crucial to the preservation of traditional social norms. But almost everybody agreed on one point: in their obsession with radically reconstructing the terms of sexual and racial identity, academics had completely lost touch with mainstream America.

This claim served both parties, for it was in the interest of each to make the other out to be a moral monster. Looming homophobia made gay studies seem a vital enterprise, and looming gay studies gave homophobes an excuse to preach intolerance. The notion that humanities professors were wildly out of touch with most Americans was the necessary obverse of the notion that most Americans were unthinking victims of the racial and sexual stereotypes humanities professors were committed to undoing. For several years, business boomed.

Then came Houston. Among its many amazing feats, the 1992 Republican National Convention ripped the cover off the contention that most people had no interest in the issues of cultural politics that preoccupied professors. At some point in the proceedings it became clear to almost everyone watching that the



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Republicans were no longer running against artists and academics (which is, after all, good politics in almost any season); they were running against television. It seemed actually not to have occurred to them that although very, very few people read academic books and attend avant-garde performance pieces, which makes attacking those things the intellectual equivalent of shooting fish in a barrel, everyone in America watches television. And yet Republican after Republican got up and started talking like a soap opera villain, or like the kind of person Larry King has to cut off. In this country, you would have better luck running against oxygen.

Paglia did not fall into this error because she was already a pop culture exegete, the sort of academic who has theories about Keith Richards as a Dionysian archetype. The theories are light-headed enough, but they at least indicate some connection with twentieth-century experience. Paglia is one of the few professors not aesthetically benumbed by the sterile *marxisant* semiotics that has driven the academic analysis of popular culture for the last twenty years; and she is one of the few critics of the university (Allan Bloom was another) who understand that in a capitalist society, the term "traditional values" is either a marketing device or a joke.

For when it comes to the business of revising conventional ideas about sexuality and the family, the work being done by professors is as nothing compared with the work being done by the popular culture. For years, American television has been proliferating images of racial and sexual difference—mostly glamorized images, of course, but that's the way images work—and preaching tolerance for them. Most English departments should be so sex-crazed and multicultural. A young African-American woman named Oprah Winfrey probably does more in a week to shake up received ideas about sex, race and the family than all the members of the Duke University English department (mostly middle-aged and white) will do in a lifetime. It sometimes seems as though, with the exception of a brief war with Iraq and the recent elections, there has been nothing on American television for the last three years *but* race, sex and gender. One statistic can serve for many examples: Phil Donahue has done sixteen shows on transsexualism and cross-dressing.

The Republicans apparently imagined that everyone was still watching "Charlie's Angels." It is not the least significant fact about Dan Quayle's famous attack on "Murphy Brown" that at the time he made it, he had not seen a single episode of the program. He was, it became clear, out of touch with mainstream America. This is not to say that anything goes in American life these days. But ignorance and blatant intolerance are among the things that are out.

For most academics engaged in "the politicization of the humanities," it is capitalism—with its ethnocentric, colonizing market dynamic; its patriarchal social and political structure; and its relentless commodification of everything—that is the real villain. For television, of course, capitalism is never the villain: capitalism is the way it is. The villain is somebody with the wrong attitude. Paglia sides with television; and it is in this respect that she sets herself apart from most of the rest of the professors. "Capitalism, whatever its problems, remains the most efficient economic mechanism yet devised to bring the highest quality of life to the greatest number," she testifies. "Because I have studied the past, I know that, in America and under capitalism, I am the freest woman in history."

This is the voice of centrist multiculturalism. And centrist multiculturalism is, in all but name, now the official ideology of the republic. For in fact there is nothing incompatible about capitalism and multiculturalism: multiculturalism is just a way of dividing up the market in a more globally relevant way. The future is Lloyd Bentsen and Donna Shalala.

CAMILLE PAGLIA BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Is it also Camille Paglia? I think it's unlikely that anyone will follow her lead, because I think it's unlikely that anyone will be able to figure out where she is headed. Her contradictory account of her own significance—her conviction that she is somehow both the symptom and the agent of a new dispensation—is typical of her intellectual style. The reason for it is not that she cannot sustain even a false modesty for more than a few sentences (although she cannot). The reason is that she is constitutionally incapable of splitting a difference. She is one of the least dialectical minds that ever claimed to be critical. Her style is a style of pure assertion. It has no philosophical shading or depth: it's just one declarative sentence after another, like an endless series of punches in the nose.

This flurry, from *Sexual Personae*, is representative:

> Apollo's wolfishness survives in his severity and austerity, his Doric plainness and rigor. The Dorians, who invaded Greece from the north in the twelfth century B.C., may have been blond, recalled in Homer's red-haired Menelaus. I think Apollonian light turned again into blondeness, one of Europe's racist motifs, glamorized in Botticelli and the Apollonian *Faerie Queene*. Blondeness is Apollo's wolfish coldness and con-

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ceptualism. It made its mark on our century in Hitler's homoerotic Aryanism and in the icy eye-spear of black and white Apollonian cinema. By the early fifth century, Greek art purged both chthonian and single-sex elements from the major Olympians. Only the brothers Zeus and Poseidon retained their full beards and burly torsos.

And so on, for hundreds of pages. There actually is an argument here; but the terms of relation between the assertions have all been suppressed, and the result is the scholarly equivalent of the stream of consciousness.

The passage is an attempt to illustrate the book's thesis, which is that Western civilization arose from the denial of the bodily, the elemental and the chthonian, and that it erected, in reaction, an anti-nature: the aggressively imagined forms of Western art and the sharp, clear outlines of the Western personality. The rage for order can issue, in Paglia's scheme, in aesthetic brilliance (the cinema), and it can issue in murderous fanaticism (Hitler). Having got these phenomena yoked so provocatively together, though, Paglia has trouble getting them apart again—she can never seem to figure out whether her enthusiasm for domination means that she likes police states, or just that she likes stunning pictures—and this is one of the reasons why instead of pausing to reflect on possible distinctions between the Nazis and the movies, she goes charging off after Greek body hair.

Many of Paglia's assertions in *Sexual Personae* are striking: some are silly. The trouble is that if one of them happens to contradict another, she cannot see her way to some more nuanced or ambivalent position in between. She never qualifies *anything*. She just keeps on punching. She is a kind of mad literalist, which is the explanation for her genuine talent for visual perception (she really sees what's there) and her ineptitude with most kinds of literature (she treats poems like pictures). Her phobia about ambiguity is, I think, the reason she is so insistent about treating the nature/culture distinction as a hard-and-fast dichotomy, rather than as simply the name for an interesting conceptual problem (which is what it is). And it is why she can only define her own position by piling up terms whose incongruities she is intellectually unable to negotiate.

"I sometimes call my new system, 'Italian pagan Catholicism,'" she says in the new book, "but it could more accurately be called 'pragmatic liberalism,' with roots in Enlightenment political philosophy. It is a synthesis of the enduring dual elements in our culture, pagan and Judeo-Christian, Romantic and Classic." That just about covers the major possibilities (and it reminds us, as well, what a handy word-of-all-work "synthesis" can truly be).

The oddest item in that mélange is "pragmatic liberalism," since in most of her writing, liberalism is Paglia's particular bête noire. Liberalism is mistaken, in her view, because it denies biological determinism: liberals think that nature is benign, and that society is the cause of suffering and unhappiness. This, she thinks, gets things exactly backward; hence the poverty of the simple constructionist position. "Society," she says in *Sexual Personae*,

> is not the criminal but the force which keeps crime in check. When social controls weaken, man's innate cruelty bursts forth. The rapist is created not by bad social influences but by a failure of social conditioning. Feminists, seeking to drive power relations out of sex, have set themselves against nature.

You can, she believes, socialize people into controlling their instincts; but you cannot change their natures. If you try, the repressed will surely return, and in an even more hideous and violent form. Rousseau (to use her formulation) produces de Sade.

This line of argument turns, of course, on what human nature is taken to be; and this is therefore where Paglia must place all her chips. She cites a number of influences on her understanding of what human beings "really are," including Freud, Jung and the British pioneers of cultural anthropology, such as J. G. Frazer and Jane Harrison. But one figure is clearly paramount. In the canceled original preface to *Sexual Personae* (published in the new collection), she pounds out the following distinction between her work and that of earlier scholars:

> My acceptance of sadomasochism as an immanent principle sharply separated me from the prior generation of literary scholars, who were largely, in my view, Rousseauist liberals. I considered their assumptions to be tenuous constructs of nineteenth-century progressivism and Christianizing goodwill. Liberal pieties still hang heavy in the air of American universities. *Sexual Personae*, so enamored of per-

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> sonality, is nevertheless a book written against humanism, or rather, against the humanities in their present academic dilution. My ambition is to rescue humanism from Rousseau and return it to its first Renaissance audacities. Understanding of literature and art, as well as current campus policy, is woefully muddled by philanthropic good intentions. The Greco-Roman Italian Renaissance, a period of strong personality and incandescent artistic genius, was fiercely competitive and conspiratorial, showy and violent.

This is all poster-art Nietzscheanism; and that, I think, is the source of whatever appeal Paglia's thesis has. The little squirm about "humanism" gives the game away: she's against humanism, it turns out, in the sense that she's against sanctimonious old English professors. This is a very inexpensive form of iconoclasm.

But Paglia doesn't really want to reproduce the whole Nietzschean critique anyway; and although she likes to toss a few clichés of brute naturalism into her argument now and then (such as: "In western culture there are no non-exploitative relationships. Everyone has killed in order to live"), the key to her thinking is the assimilation of the sex drive to the will-to-power: "Sex," as she puts it, "*is* power." Women, she believes, exert the deindividuating power of the chthonian (all those swampy fluids); men (and this explains the cultural pre-eminence of gay men) struggle to resist that power, in the process creating the Pyramids, the *Mona Lisa* and the Sony Walkman. "Most men," Paglia points out by way of proving this claim,

> merely grunt, at best. But woman's strange sexual cries come directly from the chthonian.... Sex is an uncanny moment of ritual and incantation, in which we hear woman's barbaric ululation of triumph of the will. One domination dissolves another. The dominated becomes the dominator.

This seems to me an incredibly academic view of sex. It commits the essentialist error of imagining that although actual sex is *always* complicated by emotion, circumstance and taste, there is a metaphysical sex-in-itself, which is pure (and here, since metaphysical qualities cannot be demonstrated, any term will do) "power." It is responsible for a good deal of the moral and aesthetic confusion of the new book.

One of the subjects on which Paglia has advertised a willingness to provide expert opinion, for example, is rape, which she recognizes as a natural expression of male sexual energy. "Hunt, pursuit and capture," she informs us, "are biologically programmed into male sexuality"; women need to understand the "fun element in rape, especially the wild, infectious delirium of gang rape." This insight leads to the following advice: a woman who is raped should shrug it off (on grounds that "we cannot regulate male sexuality"), and she should report it to the police (since "rape is an outrage that cannot be tolerated in civilized society").

I would find this a little hard to internalize if I were a woman. If rape is not such a big deal, why is it such a big deal? But this is the consequence of trying to combine an authoritarian view of society, according to which the inherent cruelty and aggression of people need to be continually and forcefully checked, with a libertarian view, according to which boys will be boys, and girls have to live with it.

The confusion is repeated in a short essay on the Clarence Thomas hearings, in which Paglia criticizes Anita Hill for, first, her inability to laugh off or otherwise deal personally with Thomas's "sexual banter," and, secondly, her failure to report it. "Hill chose to put her career interests above feminist principle," Paglia concludes. "She went along to get along. Hence it is hypocritical of her, ten years later, to invoke feminist principle when she did not have the courage to stand on it before." This is followed by praise of Thomas for his testimony before the Senate committee, in which he denied Hill's allegations: "Step by step, with sober, measured phrases, he regained his position and turned the momentum against his accusers. It was one of the most powerful moments I have ever witnessed on television. Giving birth to himself, Thomas re-enacted his own credo of the self-made man."

Many ideologically self-serving things were written about the Hill-Thomas affair, but this is surely the most pathetic. If it was hypocritical of Hill to protect her career by failing to report Thomas's behavior, how was it not hypocritical of Thomas to protect his by lying about it? On Paglia's own account, Clarence Thomas perjured his way onto the Supreme Court. The sexual logic evidently works like this: he created himself (as all men must) by destroying her, but she should have destroyed him first by sleeping with him (ululating barbarically, of course).

Much of *Sex, Art, and American Culture* is taken up with Paglia's feelings about popular culture (the announced subject of a second volume of *Sexual Personae*). They are the feelings of someone who responds without inhibition to the allure of commercial imagery; but they mostly generate a star-struck hyperbole that would make a teenager blush. Paglia is, we learn, a big fan of Marlon Brando ("a monumental personality of profound complexities and contradictions"), Elvis Presley ("an icon who has entered our dreams and transformed the way we see the world") and Elizabeth Taylor ("in my opinion, the greatest actress in film history"). It is good for Paglia's reputation as a maverick that she is dismissive of Marilyn Monroe, who, among other failings, "abused alcohol and drugs." (Paglia does, it should be noted, admire Robert Mapplethorpe, who is, admittedly, a special taste; she regards him, she confesses, as "my spiritual brother.")

Paglia's special infatuation is Madonna, who not only wisely eschews drugs and alcohol but represents, in Paglia's judgment, "the future of feminism." It is easy to see the attraction. For Madonna has spent most of her career simulating, with grim industry, Paglia's idea of *Wille-zur-Macht* in the bedroom; and her new book, *Sex*, is the Paglian conception of sex as undifferentiated force capable of an endless variety of manifestations—the "every Tab A must fit any Slot B" philosophy that is part of the current cant about sex—in coffee-table format.

Paglia's trouble with Madonna—whom she is nearly alone among people no longer 16 in regarding as a great show business talent—is her trouble with commercial art generally: she can't grasp the relationship between the art and the commerce. She proposes, for example, that rock musicians be subsidized by government and foundation grants for "spiritual development." (What happened to good old efficient capitalism?) And she produces the remarkable assertion that although "publicity is the language naturally used by the great stars to communicate with their vast modern audience," "Madonna ... never does anything just for publicity."

There are two items in *Sex, Art, and American Culture* that seem to me to have been worth the reprinting. One is the essay-review of books by specialists in gay studies, which first appeared in the classics journal *Arion* (it fills more than seventy pages here); the other is a transcription of a public lecture Paglia gave at MIT, the home institution of one of the professors whose books she had reviewed. Relentless assertion is good for one thing: it makes for excellent invective. And Paglia's diatribe in *Arion* against the

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IS RELIGION JUST FOR THE IGNORANT?

In many intellectual circles the myth still circulates that religion is the preserve of the dimwitted and unlettered. Yet, recently *The New York Times Magazine* carried an article on the "return to religion" among intellectuals. From Harvard to Berkeley, and amid inquisitive people generally, there's an undeniable renewal of interest in the questions traditional religion raises and seeks to answer. This fascination is largely a result of the failures of secular substitutes for religion (such as rationalism, narcissism, technological utopianism, aestheticism, and extremist political ideologies) to give abidingly satisfying answers to the truly significant puzzles in life: goodness, suffering, love, death, and the meaning of it all.

By no means, however, does this religious renaissance entail embracing the ersatz gods of dog-eat-dog individualism, consumerism, or superpatriotism. Nor does it imply a retreat from working for peace, justice, or human dignity. Rather, there's an awareness that, as Jean Bethke Elshtain put it, religious commitment "can help further social reform," and that religion can supply the ethical bedrock upon which to make political choices which are far more durable than those based on passing ideologies and enthusiasms. Nor does the new openness to religion signify a hostility to science, but rather an appreciation of the limits of science and technology.

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contemporary university is, I think, the most splendidly vitriolic of all the attacks that have been made on the American academy.

Like everything else Paglia does, these pieces are strictly yakkety-yak (don't talk back). But they are without fussiness or pious nostalgia, they pierce many pretensions, and they are funny. They call for the undoing of the self-important professionalism that has helped turn the humanities departments of American universities into hothouses of meta-interpretation, in which professors are rewarded for reflecting on the way professors reflect. They propose the abolition of the factitious disciplinary boundaries that the modern university invented, and that are now more responsible for ignorance than for knowledge. And they appeal for some connection between teaching and writing in the humanities and the realities of cultural experience. These things are not likely to happen soon, but they are good things to want.

Paglia insists, in these pieces, that she is the authentic voice of the '60s generation, chastened by the political experiences of the '80s and now back to expose the fakery of contemporary intellectual culture. Her own view of the '60s and the '80s is so clichéd that the claim is impossible to credit. Some such voice, though, would be welcome. I'm pretty certain that this is not it. •

A House Divided

By Aleksa Djilas

A Paper House: The Ending of Yugoslavia
by Mark Thompson
(Pantheon, 350 pp., $23)

The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War
by Misha Glenny
(Penguin, 193 pp., $10 paper)

Serbs and Croats: The Struggle in Yugoslavia
by Alex N. Dragnich
(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 202 pp., $22.95)

In the late 1980s, just before the disintegration of Yugoslavia began, the country's international position was unprecedentedly good. Never since its creation in 1918 from the kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro and the South Slav provinces of Austria-Hungary had it had fewer enemies and more friends. Separatists within its national groups had no significant support from abroad, and the major powers—the United States, the Soviet Union, Western Europe, China—as well as the overwhelming majority of Third World countries, wanted Yugoslavia to continue as one country. It was generally expected to be the first Eastern European country admitted into the European Community.

In 1990 the six republics of Yugoslavia held free elections in which Yugoslav communism was completely defeated. Although the Communist parties (with suitably altered names) won the elections in Serbia and Montenegro, the political system that they were fashioning was, for better or worse, as different from Titoist communism as the systems that the victorious anti-Communists were set to create in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia.

The Communists, led by Josip Broz Tito, a Croat, had come to power in Yugoslavia at the end of the Second World War, after fighting valiantly against the Nazi German and Fascist Italian occupiers of Yugoslavia. After the war they succeeded in reuniting the various national groups, and they defied Stalin's attempt in 1948 to subjugate Yugoslavia. They also created a political and economic system that was more open and moderate than the Eastern European ones. By 1990, however, the majority of Yugoslavs correctly regarded the system as oppressive, corrupt and incapable of solving any of the country's problems: economic decline and rising unemployment, crises in the relations among national groups, discontentment among intellectuals.

The rejection of communism in the elections was accompanied by a reaffirmation of nationalism. Nationalist parties won the elections in all the republics, and nationalism had been the central political platform of almost all the losing parties as well. The prevalence of nationalism inevitably led to tensions and violent clashes, in particular between the Croats and Serbs, the two largest groups. (In the summer of 1990 there had already been exchanges of fire between Croatian forces and Serbian irregulars, who were struggling for control of Serbian regions of Croatia.) Croats and Serbs had a long and bitter tradition of conflict, but they had also often cooperated in the past; for centuries they had lived mixed together in many parts of Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia's northern province of Vojvodina. But the coexistence of the past was soon forgotten in the nationalist fervor that overwhelmed the country.

Under Communist rule, and frequently in opposition to it, a powerful common culture that was genuinely Yugoslav had developed. Still, many inside and outside the country were not surprised by the electoral triumph of nationalism. Yugoslav communism had not persecuted any one national group, and it had repressed all open expressions of nationalism, but it could not truly enlighten people and teach them to think rationally and critically about their past. There was little to counteract the tendency of the Yugoslav groups to forget their ethnic and linguistic similarities, to say nothing of the much more dangerous tendency to overemphasize differences in their religious and their historical traditions, drawing on pseudo-romantic, self-aggrandizing myths about themselves and negative stereotypes about the others.

After the elections in 1990, it became obvious that the Slovene nation wanted to split from Yugoslavia. So did the Croats, who hoped to take at least a part of Bosnia-Herzegovina with them. Separatist sentiments also ruled the hearts of Macedonians and Bosnian Muslims, but for a while they felt too weak to make any open demands. Serbs (along with Montenegrins, who regard themselves as closely related to Serbs) wanted to keep Yugoslavia united, but only if the others would accept Serbian predominance; and if not, then the Serbs wanted to secede as well, but not without taking with them the parts of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina containing substantial numbers of Serbs. Under Commu-

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nist rule no independent institutions—no assemblies or judicial bodies—had been created that could mediate between the national groups once disagreements among them arose. Thus the stage was set for a civil war.

The cover of Mark Thompson's book shows a large building on fire, presumably somewhere in war-torn former Yugoslavia, but his account will disappoint those looking for reportage or analysis of the civil war. Thompson seems to have left the country before serious fighting had started: the main characters of the Yugoslav tragedy never appear in his account. Instead he offers antebellum conversations with mostly marginal intellectual and political figures, and his ruminations about the history and the character of the various Yugoslav groups are based exclusively on well-known books in English. Occasionally he makes an astute remark—"I watched Serbia destroy Yugoslavia in the name of Yugoslavia, while storing up disaster for itself, in the name of its own future"—but most of what he says is not new.

For an account of what has actually happened during the Yugoslav conflict, Misha Glenny's book so far stands unparalleled. Between the spring of 1991 and the spring of 1992, Glenny, who speaks Serbo-Croatian, made a number of journeys through what used to be Yugoslavia for the BBC. He talked to important political leaders and visited all the major battlefields, often at great risk. His courage (which he modestly downplays) was well rewarded: his book is vigorous, passionate, humane and extremely readable. It is also fair and objective, a rare virtue in Western writing about this war.

In June 1991 the Slovenes announced that they had seceded and took control of Slovenia's borders with Italy, Austria and Hungary, which were also Yugoslavia's internationally recognized borders. The Yugoslav army (acting on orders from the federal government, which in turn seems to have had the approval of the United States) made a feeble attempt to regain control but was attacked by the units of Slovenian territorial defense. No major conflict ensued. Slovenes won easily, and the army withdrew quickly. The army, increasingly dominated by Serbian nationalists, was simply not very interested in Slovenia, which did not have a Serbian minority.

Croatia was a different story. Since the ascent to power in May 1990 of an intransigent nationalist party led by the former Communist general Franjo Tudjman, Croatia's Serbian minority had been severely persecuted. Glenny is one of the rare Western journalists who has shown an interest in the predicament of the Serbs in Croatia:

> Even before the war began, the government [of Croatia] was concerned to hush up nationalist-motivated crimes against its Serb population while when applying for [international] recognition, its police and soldiers were involved in the slaughter of innocent Serbs in Gospić, Ogulin, Sisak, Karlovac, Daruvar, Virovitice, Zagreb and elsewhere.... These urban Serbs were among the greatest victims of the war, whose plight, however, is one of the least well known. Tens of thousands were hounded from their homes in the big cities either through direct intimidation, expulsion or through the pervasive climate of fear.

This treatment of Croatia's Serbian minority played perfectly into the aggressive plans of Serbian nationalists led by Slobodan Milošević, the president of Serbia. They could portray contemporary Croatia as a reincarnation of the fascist state of World War II that massacred between 200,000 and 300,000 Serbian civilians, as well as many thousands of Jews and Gypsies. (Actually Serbian nationalists characteristically exaggerate the number of Serbs killed, claiming 1 million or more.) The Serbs' own expansionist ambitions could thus be portrayed as a noble struggle to help their persecuted brethren.

After many months of sporadic fighting, the war proper began in Croatia in the summer of 1991, soon after Croatia's formal secession, and reached its greatest intensity that autumn. By the beginning of 1992, fighting had almost completely halted, leaving some 10,000 dead (two-thirds of them Serbian) and many towns destroyed (most of them with Croatian majorities). The Serbs had captured one-quarter of the Croatian territories, mostly those regions in which they were a majority before the fighting had started. Although these territories are formally still part of Croatia, and the United Nations troops are now keeping the peace there, the local administration and police are completely in Serbian hands. The horrors of war and Serbian pressure forced perhaps as many as 200,000 Croats to leave. Similar numbers of Serbs left parts of Croatia under Croatian control.

The Serbian authorities in the Serbian-controlled territories of Croatia are successfully obstructing the efforts of the U.N. peacekeepers to allow the return of the Croats who have left. In their place, they are, in cooperation with the Milošević government of Serbia, bringing in Serbs who had left other parts of Croatia. Once these Serbs are settled, it is unlikely that they will ever give the land back to the Croats, since they themselves cannot return to those parts of Croatia that they had to flee. But even if the Croatian government were to encourage the Serbs to return, the majority would be reluctant to go back unless the anti-Serbian atmosphere in Croatia were to change, which is an unlikely prospect anytime soon.

After failing to achieve unity in a common Yugoslav state, or tolerance toward each other in separate national states, Croats and Serbs seem determined to separate once and for all. Since the second half of the nineteenth century, Croatian nationalists have considered acquiring independence ("sovereignty") their first priority, and national homogeneity (that is, the suppression or the expulsion of minorities, in particular the Serbs) their second. Territorial demands have come only third. Croatia is now an independent country, internationally recognized, and since May 1991 it has been a member of the U.N. It has only an insignificant number of Serbs still within its frontiers, so only the reconquest of Croatia's territories controlled by Serbs remains to be accomplished.

The Croatian government may not be

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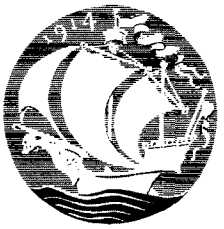

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ready to risk very much for the completion of this traditionally less important task. Of course Tudjman will never formally recognize Serbian rule over any part of Croatia: if he did, the opposition would instantly accuse him of treason. But fearing the censure of the West and a boycott (which has already been threatened), he may abstain from starting a military offensive against Serbian-controlled territories. Moreover, Croatia is economically exhausted, and if the war drew in Serbia and Montenegro, it would be outgunned and outnumbered, too.

The sensible and fair solution to the problem of the Serbian-held territories of Croatia would be for Serbs to allow these regions to be reincorporated into Croatia, and for Croats to grant the Serbs considerable autonomy in them. But the mood of intransigent nationalism that now rules both groups makes such a settlement very unlikely. Even if it were reached, as a result of Western pressure on both sides, it is still unlikely that the Croatian and Serbian populations would mix again. There has been too much hatred, too much mistrust.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina the separation of Croats and Serbs is almost complete. This was not some unintended consequence of the war that is being fought in this former republic of Yugoslavia; it was one of the main reasons the Croats and the Serbs started the war in the first place. In the referendum of February 29–March 1, 1992, the Croats voted together with the Muslims for the secession of Bosnia-Herzegovina from Yugoslavia (from which Slovenia and Croatia had already seceded), while the Serbs, who were opposed to secession, boycotted the referendum. The Croats shared with the Muslims only the desire to separate from Yugoslavia. They did not wish to stay inside Bosnia-Herzegovina once it became independent, but, like the Serbs, wanted out of it. Their aspirations enjoyed the full support of Tudjman's government, which long before the referendum had openly declared the borders between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina to be invalid. Croats from western Herzegovina, a region that during the Second World War contributed some of the most fervent fighters and leaders to the fascist Croatian state, were particularly determined to secede.

In April 1992, just a month after the Bosnian referendum, the European Community and the United States recognized Bosnia-Herzegovina's independence. (The United States also recognized Croatia and Slovenia, both of which had already been recognized by the European Community in January.) By means of such recognition, the Europeans and the Americans intended to give an international guarantee to the borders of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and in this way to prevent the Croats and the Serbs within them from seceding. They failed to understand that, in the absence of a constitutional reorganization of Bosnia-Herzegovina that would be acceptable to Croats and Serbs, and in the absence of a broad-minded policy on the part of the predominately Muslim government of Bosnia-Herzegovina, recognition would inevitably produce war.

The fighting started immediately, and from the beginning the main strategy of the paramilitary formations of each of the three groups was the mass expulsion ("ethnic cleansing") of the members of the other two groups. Much has been made in the Western media of the multiethnic character of Sarajevo's defenders, but they have always consisted mostly of Muslims, and as the fighting has continued the number of Croats and Serbs among them has dwindled to insignificance. Although Sarajevo had some tradition of tolerance, it could not succeed where both Yugoslavia and Bosnia-Herzegovina had previously failed; it could not preserve its multinational unity against that seemingly irresistible historical force that makes one's national group the primary focus of loyalty. The greatest victims of "ethnic cleansing" have been the Muslims, who by now have perhaps as many as 1 million refugees, and the greatest victimizers were the Serbs, whose conduct encountered particularly strong condemnation from the international community. (Glenny rightly devotes considerable attention to the "barbaric behavior of the Serb paramilitary organizations who committed crime after crime against civilians.") Serbs now control almost two-thirds, and Croats one-third, of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The remainder is still under the control of the Muslim government in Sarajevo.

Croats and Serbs continue to fight fiercely with each other in some regions of Bosnia-Herzegovina, but they have not engaged in large battles for quite some time. There is clearly a general agreement between them about the lines along which Bosnia-Herzegovina should be partitioned. And the majority of ordinary Croats and Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina seem to have accepted with fatalism that they will be expelled from the territories that the other group controls. The Muslims are left with hardly any territory by the present Croatian-Serbian division. If territories conquered

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by Croats and Serbs are not returned to Muslims, and a sizable Muslim political unit is not created, the Muslims will be a people without a homeland.

The inability of Yugoslavs, particularly of Croats and Serbs, to find a peaceful and civilized way to live together or to separate has puzzled Western politicians, journalists and scholars since the creation of Yugoslavia in 1918. In his new book, Alex N. Dragnich, an American scholar of Serbian origin, sets himself the task of correcting "errors of fact" and "highly misleading interpretations" about Yugoslavia's past that have in his view influenced the reporting by the American press of the 1991-92 civil war. His other goal, this one less explicit, is to defend the Serbian side in past and present conflicts.

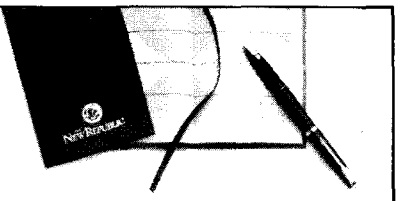
Dragnich is not a belligerent Serb. By the standard of the many books, journals and newspapers published in Belgrade during the last few years, his book is moderate. Yet he is far from fair in his distribution of blame for the nationalist conflicts. His version of history, though it purports to portray a workable path toward unity that was misguidedly abandoned, in fact reveals just how heavily the past weighs on any efforts to chart a course for the future. Dragnich focuses on King Aleksandar of Yugoslavia as the great reconciler, but his portrait is too simple and generous. Aleksandar was not, as Dragnich claims, a constitutional monarch even during the 1918-29 period of parliamentary rule. He had many prerogatives, and the Serbs, the most numerous Yugoslav group and the one from which Aleksandar's Karadjordjević dynasty came, never trusted a fully sovereign Parliament. The soldier-king's suspension of Parliament in 1929, and his introduction of a new constitution in 1931 (which made him the center of political power), represented the completion of his long struggle to enlarge and to consolidate his authority; they were not temporary aberrations forced onto this supposedly democratically-minded Serb and "sincere Yugoslav."

Many Serbs shared Aleksandar's contempt for Yugoslav parliamentary politics and supported his 1929-34 personal rule, believing that it would achieve the national unity that had been endangered by the incessant quarrels and fights between Serbian and Croatian deputies. Aleksandar embraced the ideology of Yugoslav unity known as "Yugoslavism": he was the one who in 1929 had changed the country's name from the "Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes" to Yugoslavia. But he robbed Yugoslavism of its liberal democratic essence.

As envisioned by the leading Croatian and Serbian intellectual and political figures in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Yugoslavism was an enlightened and voluntary agreement to transcend the narrow confines of individual South Slav religious and historical traditions (in particular Catholic Croatian, Orthodox Serbian and Muslim) in the name of a larger Yugoslav unity upheld by free political institutions. This Yugoslavism was not only the most noble and high-minded solution to the South Slav national question, it was also the most sensible solution, given that the different groups were mixed together and that Croatian and Serbian national ideologies often demanded the same territories (for example, Bosnia-Herzegovina), which inevitably led to conflict.

It is true that Aleksandar's rule was not particularly harsh by the standards of interwar Europe, where all the countries in the south, center and east (except Switzerland and Czechoslovakia) were either dictatorships or on their way to dictatorship. Mussolini called the king "a disgrace to all us dictators." But this does not alter the fact that in promoting Yugoslavism through personal rule, increased centralism, arrests of political leaders, special courts for political offenses, censorship and much police brutality (including regular torture for Communists and militant nationalists), Aleksandar was alienating the non-Serbian groups. They might have resented Aleksandar's dictatorship less had he not relied so much on Serbian political, military, diplomatic and administrative elites. Croats in particular saw dictatorial royal Yugoslavism as promoting Serbian interests, and reacted with separatist demands.

The failure of interwar Yugoslavism to create genuine unity caused deep divisions among the Serbs about what course the Serbian nation should take. Some important figures were inclined toward compromises with non-Serbs and the transformation of the country into a federation. Many more came to believe in a Serbian state, encompassing all those lands in which Serbs were the majority or which they considered historically theirs. This was a resurrection of the idea of Greater Serbia that had arisen among the Serbs in the nineteenth century, at a time when similar ideas were thriving in most other parts of Europe: Germans wanted an enlarged Reich, Poles dreamed of Poland stretching all the way to the Black Sea, the Greeks had their "Megali [great] idea," Hungarians, Bulgarians and Croats wanted respectively Greater Hungary, Greater Bul-



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garia and Greater Croatia.

Such ambitions for territorial expansion, megalomaniacal though they were, usually did not entail demands for the expulsion of minorities. But the more these states expanded, the more precarious the position of minorities became. The establishment of federalism would have assured equality of minority groups, and it might have made them loyal to the states in which they had suddenly found themselves. But national ideologies in central, eastern and southern Europe (again aside from the Swiss) never accepted this principle. Nationalists were too distrustful of neighbors to allow the devolution of central power. Federalism was therefore regarded as weakening the state structure, and demands for it were often treated as treason.

In Yugoslavia, federalism was imposed after the Second World War by the victorious Communists, and it became an efficient barrier to the hegemony of any nation over others, as well as a framework in which particular national traditions could be preserved. But national ideologies, in particular the Croatian and Serbian ones, never accepted federalism. Many Serbs dreamed of a centralized, Serbian-dominated Yugoslavia or of a centralized Greater Serbia, while many Croats hoped for an independent, enlarged and centralized Croatia. Since Communist power would not allow the realization of such ambitions, national ideologies moderated themselves for tactical reasons, and demanded only greater autonomy from the federal center in Belgrade.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Communists adapted themselves to the demands of national ideologies and gave more and more power to the six republics and the two autonomous provinces that composed Yugoslavia. This process, which became known as the "confederalization" of Yugoslavia, accelerated with Tito's death in 1980. But no state structure was loose enough for the nationalists who became dominant both inside and outside the Communist Party. They increasingly insisted on completely independent national states. As Yugoslav unity began to crumble, Croats and Serbs went even further and demanded Greater Croatia and Greater Serbia. Immediately, the specter of ethnic cleansing arose.

As Daniel Patrick Moynihan recently and rightly observed, "Of the next fifty states which will come into being in the next fifty years, ethnic conflict will be almost the defining characteristic by which that process will take place." Thus international organizations and the United States are confronted with an immense task: the preparation of a blueprint for dealing with ethnicity in Yugoslavia and elsewhere in the world. That will involve the establishment of new procedures regarding international law, and a new role for the U.N., NATO and the United States.

Above all, it will require a sober awareness of what cannot be achieved. In our century more often than at any other time in history, ethnic groups have been forced by other groups with which they once lived to flee their territories. They have hardly ever returned; and when they have, it is most often as pitiless victors expelling those who once expelled them. A powerful external force (for example, the United States) may prevent, by means of condemnation, embargoes or the threat of air strikes, the most extreme forms of "ethnic cleansing," that is, those organized on a large scale and in a centralized way. But there are many other ways in which a stronger group can "cleanse," and force a weaker one to leave: terror through unofficial paramilitary units; discrimination at work and in school; hostile propaganda and incitement in the media. All this can happen, and for the most part does happen, without any overall plan or central control, so there is no government or central authority that can be pressured to stop it.

Only direct and permanent military occupation can ensure that hostile populations will peacefully coexist on the same territory. Until not so long ago, most of the world was ruled by empires that forcefully prevented ethnic groups from fighting with each other. Of course, no country in today's world wants to create an empire. Too many soldiers' lives would have to be sacrificed and too much money spent. And the idea of empire itself is now alien to most people.

That leaves only the "solution" of partition, as equitable a partition as possible, once it becomes obvious that certain ethnic groups cannot coexist peacefully any longer. Formulating such arrangements—a task that is likely to fall to the U.N., NATO and the United States—will not be easy. Determining which part of the territory a particular group should get, and how large it should be, requires taking into account not only the size of the population but also economic, historical, strategic and many other factors as well. As soon as the new borders are established, they should be internationally recognized, and any attempt to change them should be severely discouraged. In the coming decades, the formation of new states by means of ethnic conflict cannot be prevented, but at least it may be controlled and regulated. A house divided against itself cannot stand, and only rarely can it be reunited, but it can be transformed into separate and livable homes.

ALEKSA DJILAS, a fellow of the Russian Research Center at Harvard University, is the author of *The Contested Country: Yugoslav Unity and Communist Revolution, 1919-1953* (Harvard University Press).

The Horned Rampion

Daily, out of that unfamiliar,
entrancingly perpendicular
terrain, some new
and, on minute
inspection, marvelous
thing would be opening—

yet another savory-
flowery permutation
of selene or salvia,
of scabious, of rockrose,
of evening primrose, of
bellflower such as the one

I'd never before laid eyes
on the like of: spurred,
spirily airy, a sort of
stemborne baldachin,
a lone, poised,
hovering rarity, hued

midway between the clear
azure of the rosemary
and the aquilegia's
somberer purple,
that turned out to be
named the horned rampion.

Next day it was no longer
singular but several;
the day after, many.
Within a week it was
everywhere, had become
the mere horned rampion,

had grown so familiar
I forgot it, had not
thought of it since,
it seems, until the moment
a volume of the Encyclopedia
Britannica, pulled down

for some purpose, fell open
at random, and there was
the horned rampion, named
and depicted, astonishing
in memory as old love
reopened, still quivering.

AMY CLAMPITT

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Out of History

By Robert Pinsky

Canvas
by Adam Zagajewski
translated by Renata Gorczynski, Benjamin Ivry, and C. K. Williams

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 81 pp., $20)

Unlikely as it may seem, the poems of the Polish poet Adam Zagajewski, wonderful in themselves, may also suggest ways to think about American culture. Zagajewski's shrewd, clear, passionate poems have a distinctive way of touching the relation of historical reality to the lives of individuals, and to art. And because he writes in the language of a country that has seen itself as small, often-defeated, but innately noble and even aristocratic—a nation deeply unified by shared religion, art, historical knowledge—the contrast alone should interest us.

So Zagajewski deserves the attention of readers accustomed to swerve away from poetry. And moreover, he is good: the unmistakable quality of the real thing—a sunlike force that wilts clichés and bollixes the categories of expectation—manifests itself powerfully through able translation, both in Zagajewski's first book in English, *Tremor* (1985), and now in *Canvas*.

This book is about the presence of the past in ordinary life: history not as chronicle of the dead, or an *anima* to be illuminated by some doctrine, but as an immense, sometimes subtle force inhering in what people see and feel every day—and in the ways we see and feel. As an almost too-literal example of what I mean, here is the first two-thirds or so of the author's "Electric Elegy":

> Farewell, German radio with your green eye
> and your bulky box,
> together almost composing
> a body and soul. (Your lamps glowed
> with a pink, salmony light, like Bergson's
> deep self.)
> Through the thick fabric
> of the speaker (my ear glued to you as
> to the lattice of a confessional), Mussolini
> once whispered,
> Hitler shouted, Stalin calmly explained,
> Beirut hissed, Gomulka held endlessly forth.
> But no one, radio, will accuse you of treason;
> no, your only sin was obedience: absolute,
> tender faithfulness to the megahertz;
> whoever came was welcomed, whoever was
> sent
> was received.
> Of course I know only
> the songs of Schubert brought you the jade
> of true joy. To Chopin's waltzes
> your electric heart was troubled delicately
> and firmly and the cloth over the speaker
> pulsated like the breasts of amorous girls
> in old novels.

"History" in this poem is embodied not by the catalog of dictators, but on the contrary by a whole web of forces that have passed through the patient radio, and that the poem acknowledges and resists. Such acknowledgment and resistance generate a poise of emotional realities: the affectionate irony toward Bergson's deep self; the amused simile of the confessional lattice; the sensuous loyalty to Chopin and Schubert; the way in which that loyalty concedes its own schmaltziness with the "pulsating breasts"; and the corresponding way that the parade of dictators is held back from mere rhetoric by the comically judicious precision of "Stalin calmly explained" and "Gomulka held endlessly forth."

In the spirit of acknowledgment, the past of Europe cannot be separated from the life of the poet's own "body and soul," tinted indelibly by history. But in the spirit of resistance, the poem is written precisely to separate the poet's body and soul from the history that pours through him like a ferocious broadcast. Apart from the totality of historical forces, as independent of that web as perceiving the web can make him, the poet is an animate version of the humble radio: something a little different from what passes through it and makes it tremble. This distinction is a potential bewilderment to us Americans, who are sometimes ready to sentimentalize the presence of history and politics in art.

Zagajewski is a prominent member of the generation of Polish poets—a generation called "the '68 Generation" in Tadeusz Nyczek's anthology *Humps and Wings*—who took compulsory grade-school courses in dialectical materialism. Some of them were in the Marxist-Leninist equivalent of the Boy Scouts. When they came of age, they were active in the Solidarity movement and the student agitations that preceded it. As poets, Zagajewski and such colleagues as Stanislaw Baranczak were drawn both to the sharp, compressed ironies of Zbigniew Herbert and to the deeply historical moral discrimination of the exiled Czeslaw Milosz: poets of opposite kind who shared the ability to immerse their work in the tidal force of history without succumbing in those waters.

For these young poets, the great tower of pre-Marxist European culture, officially minimized or rejected, held the attraction of rich, forbidden territory. Thus, the American reader will find in Zagajewski's poems startlingly many proper names of artists and thinkers: entries from the great catalog of, in two words, Western Civilization. Last year, in an essay in these pages called "History's Children," Zagajewski evoked

> the incredible contempt with which the past was treated by communism when it still believed in itself. Antiquity, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance were depicted in schoolbooks as epochs full of mistakes, ravings, misunderstandings, crimes. Perhaps this would not have been a bad description of history, if its goal and its premise were not the even more servile glorification of the existing system.

So knowledge of the proper names of European history—knowledge that in the United States can seem curricular or canonical in ways that might be associated with duty, or even with oppression—for the Polish poet betokens liberty, and because it involves the forbidden garden of art, liberty not only of the mind, but also of the senses.

Despite or because of this difference from the American circumstance, Zagajewski's work has attracted the attention of young American poets, for whom I think he offers a revealing mirror of contrasts. The Polish language binds together a remarkably homogeneous people—nearly all Catholics—for whom Polish poetry, both in its folk tradition and in its aristocratic tradition, is a readily available, sensory embodiment of national feeling. Poland's student revolt of March 1968 began in response to the banning of a work by the nineteenth-century Romantic poet Adam Mickiewicz. Our own country, too diverse and too raw to have a unifying folk tradition, with a problematic relation to the aristocratic, courtly origins of English literature, has been held together by poetry only in the enduring bardic dream of Whitman. And though nothing reeks of history more than our diversity, our national myth of an ahistorical present constitutes something like the opposite of the Polish myth of mystic survival, in which such forces of memory as

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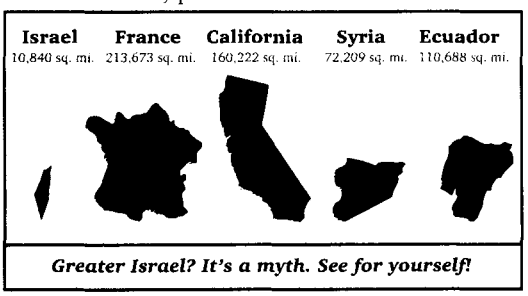
Israel's Borders. "Palestine", part of the Ottoman Empire before World War I, came under British mandate after that war. The Golan Heights were part of Palestine. Israel's current borders are the result of the 1948 War of Independence, in which six Arab armies invaded the new-born state, but were utterly defeated, and the 1967 Six-Day War, in which those same armies once again invaded Israel. In that war, Israel conquered the Gaza Strip, the vast Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Heights. And Israel also *repossessed* the provinces of Judea/Samaria, (the "West Bank"), and the eastern part of Jerusalem, which had been occupied by the Jordanians nineteen years earlier when they invaded the just new-born Jewish state. In order to achieve peace with Egypt, Israel returned to it all of the Sinai. Israel is and has always been prepared to grant full autonomy to the Arabs living in Judea/Samaria. It is clear to all knowledgeable in military matters that, for immutable strategic reasons, Israel cannot for any foreseeable future abandon or yield military control of Judea/Samaria and of the Golan Heights.



Greater Israel? It's a myth. See for yourself!

The Myth of Greater Israel. Israel is one of the smallest countries in the world. Most people don't realize how small it really is. One wonders whether former Secretary of State Baker was aware of it when he uttered his memorable phrase of "Greater Israel". A look at the map is revealing. Including the vaunted "West Bank", the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights, the entire area of the country is barely over 10,000 square miles. France is twenty times as large as Israel, California fifteen time as large, Syria about seven times as large, and "tiny" Ecuador ten times as large. Israel is so small that its area is less than half the size of San Bernadino County, California; if it were dropped into Lake Michigan it would disappear from sight without a trace. The Arab countries in contrast are huge—they occupy twice the area of the United States.

It is clear that the concept of "Greater Israel", lacks any validity and has no basis in fact. To apply such a concept to a country as small as Israel would almost seem a mockery. Obviously, Israel has no territorial ambitions. All it wants is to live in peace within secure and defensible borders, just as any other country and as required under U.N. Resolution No. 242. But it seems that the *size* of Israel, whether "greater" or "lesser" is not at all the concern of Israel's implacable Arab enemies. The very *existence* of Israel, of a Jewish state in their midst of whatever size, is unacceptable to the Arabs. And unless that mindset changes, not until the Arab states have become democracies and have come to full acceptance of Israel, are willing to make *true* peace with it, and are prepared to establish normal and friendly relations with Israel can any possible territorial adjustment be considered. As it looks right now, that may still take some time.

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poetry and religion overcome the temporary triumphs of tanks.

So for the American reader there may be something attractive, mysterious and alien in Zagajewski's buoyant, even affectionate relation to the immense European cargo of history, art and ideas. Such presence of history in experience, for want of some other word, must be called culture—a term whose solemnity does not fit the intimate, ironic, charitable voice of these poems. Here is another example:

SAILS

There were evenings, as scarlet as
Phoenician sails,
that soaked up the light and the air; I was
suddenly nearly gasping
for breath, blinded by the slanted rays
of the somnolent sun. This is how epochs
end, I thought,
how overloaded ships sink, how the eyelids
of old theaters droop, and what's left is
dust, smoke,
sharp stones underfoot, and fear looking like
joy, and the end, which is tranquility.

Soon enough, though, it turns out to be
only another
dress rehearsal, one more frantic
improvisation:
the extras go home, swallows fall asleep
in precarious nests, the provincial
moon timidly slips into place,
robbers steal wigs, a priest writes to his
mother.

How patiently you prepare and enure us,
what time you lavish on us,
what a teacher of history you are, Earth!

From its first bold simile, this brief meditation on the deceptive quality of historical time sees nature through human ideas and artifacts. The somnolent sun and the provincial moon are not the furniture of Romantic sentiment, however, but an acknowledgment of how one sees: an acknowledgment that the poet perceives all time as historical. To put such large propositions in terms that do not appear large, but fine-grained, tender and even domestic is Zagajewski's particular genius.

Thus, the scarlet sails of the evening, heroic and archaic, prepare the way for the less heroic moon, which sidles into place like a latecomer apologizing her way toward the appointed seat on a crowded theater aisle. The dramatic idea of epochs ending is amended by the image "how the eyelids of old theaters droop," a characteristic, brilliant image whose resonant wit combines architecture, the human body, moral time and the central concern of the poem. The compassionate theatricality of that drooping eyelid embodies the kind of history that earth teaches: a moral truth complexly epitomized by a physical process.

This is the reality of time: mere astonishment at such a reality is nostalgia,

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which like other naive forms of astonishment has no place in Zagajewski's art, precisely because his sense of time is historical. In such poetry, earthly time is perceived: as if the intervening color it places on perception could be described. The surface is frequently matter-of-fact and understated, emotion framed in an image, as in the German radio or in these lines from "September Afternoon in the Abandoned Barracks," where it is a passing rooster that crystallizes feeling:

> The overgrown grass in the yard
> needs mowing.
> Silence where blue-skulled
> recruits sobbed.
> In me, too, silence, no longer despair.
> A black rooster, a hot black banner of blood
> runs down a path.
> Autumn fades.
> war dims.

This is the way poetry can regard events: in the tone of someone who knows, not the answers or the facts or the truth, but exactly where he is in relation to what he sees.

From the firmness of this viewpoint, even Auschwitz can be invoked without excess or posturing. By viewpoint, I mean something more or less literal. Because the poet has thought through his place in time, and his relation to his locale, his voice can have a human sound, with neither complacency nor the borrowed thunder of atrocity-retailing. In "Watching Shoah in a Hotel Room in America," fellow guests can be heard through the walls singing "Happy Birthday." The poet observes, "the trees of my childhood have crossed an ocean / to greet me coolly from the screen." The adverb "coolly" is precise, and laden with meaning that gives proportion to a later image: "only the aspen, as usual, trembles, / prepared to confess all its crimes." The poet grows sleepy, the singers of "Happy Birthday" persist, while on the screen "the Czech Jews sing the national anthem: 'Where is my home....'" The words of the anthem are echoed in the lament of the remarkable final lines:

> Alas, we outlived mankind, now
> let us sleep, sleep:
> we have nowhere to go.

In the essay "History's Children" Zagajewski offers a gloss on this notion of "outliving mankind." He tells of a lecture he heard when he was quite young, delivered by a poet, "talented, but not well known":

> Have you noticed, ladies and gentlemen, he asked us, five people, three high school students, and two older women, one of whom fell asleep after a few minutes and slept as soundlessly as an Indian, have you noticed, ladies and gentlemen, that the poems, novels or screenplays being written now blame everything on history? Have you noticed that we no longer exist, we, that is, people who are the heart of will and thought, the lens of individual fate? Only history that fills, rents and destroys and exhaustively defines us is left.... But I will never agree to this. I would rather be mad than historical. I would rather be ridiculous than common. I would rather know nothing than understand everything.

This is not very different from the vision at the end of "Watching Shoah in a Hotel Room in America": "alas, we have outlived mankind." Historical or cultural determinism, an idea that in some of its forms has seemed fresh and astringent to American academics of Zagajewski's generation, seems to the poet raised under state Marxism part of a dreary proposition—linked to atrocity and numbness. In his poems Zagajewski tests the contrary of that proposition by striving to perceive history from somewhere a little out of it, like a fish breaking water.

The achievement of these poems is partly in that act of rising above a lived-in element. In Zagajewski's work, the engulfing, ferocious historical reality appears as our habitat—not a well of horrors to be borrowed for rhetorical thunder, not an occasion for verse punditry, not a mere backdrop for sensibility. And the perception of that habitat has a mysterious, elating power.

In his poem, "A Talk with Friedrich Nietzsche," Zagajewski touches on that mysterious power. "Most highly respected Professor Nietzsche," he begins. Then:

> Not tall, head like a bullet,
> You compose a new book
> and a strange energy hovers around you.
> Your thoughts parade
> like enormous armies.
>
> You know that Anne Frank died,
> and her classmates and friends, boys, girls,
> and friends of her friends, and cousins
> and friends of her cousins.
>
> What are words, I want to ask you, what
> is clarity and why do words keep burning
> a century later, though the earth
> weighs so much?

This daring blend of almost slapstick comedy and horror, the faux-naïf and the prophetic, makes its inventive way toward concluding lines that extend the series of questions still further:

> And from whence does joy come, and where
> does nothingness go? Where is forgiveness?
> Why do the incidental dreams vanish at
> dawn
> and the great ones keep growing?

In their audacious humanity, these poems provide their own answer.

ROBERT PINSKY's verse translation of the *Inferno* will be published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

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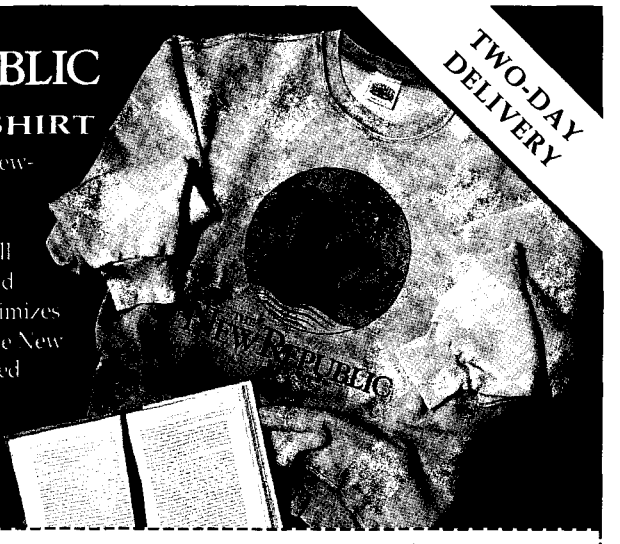

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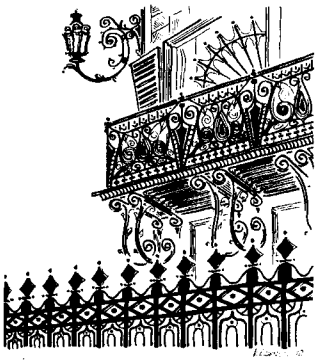
NEW ORLEANS DIARIST

Bowled over

"ROOOOOOOOOOOOLLL...." AT 2 a.m. on New Year's day, a low rumbling sound was still coming through the walls of my house. It was something like a roll of thunder, the main difference being that thunder doesn't unroll for four hours. "ROOOOOOOOLLL ... TIDE!" The rumble was man-made. The Sugar Bowl, the national championship football game between the Crimson Tide of Alabama and the Hurricanes of Miami, was scheduled to be played a short walk from my house in the French Quarter, where I live a couple of months a year. In the days leading up to the game, 40,000 large, loud men of the South had made their way to New Orleans, staging a ten-mile traffic jam on the highway leading into the city before planting themselves on a nearby corner, stripping off their shirts, painting their bodies and howling ritually at each other. This sort of thing is not uncommon in the French Quarter, but it is usually restricted to Bourbon Street, which serves as a kind of psychological drainage ditch for the more repressed parts of the United States. About the best thing that can be said about Bourbon Street is that it is cheaper than therapy. Now it was overflowing. For several days my once tranquil neighborhood resembled a playoff match among the all-stars of the Iron John fantasy camp competition.

THAT EVENING A FRIEND AND I took our seats high in the terrace of the Superdome. The crowd appeared to be split along partisan lines, a huge majority for the Crimson Tide and a small minority for the Hurricanes. But there is another, more important, spiritual division in any football crowd, between the football faithful and the football cynics. The faithful are the hordes you see on television. Men in war paint and women blowing four-foot-long horns. They hang on every play and bay for the blood of the opposing quarterback. For several hours they sustain the fantasy that they're the ones out there on the field. They wear replicas of real jerseys, with the name and number of the player they would most like to be mistaken for. After a win they slap palms and shout, "We did it!" Possibly because they have no control over the outcome, they are deeply superstitious, believing that the football gods reward conspicuous displays of fervor. The man next to us, for example, announced to everyone in section 612 that he was wearing the same underwear he wore the day Alabama secured the league championship. My kind of people.

FOOTBALL CYNICS ARE MORE coldly rational. The protos of the type are businessmen with a financial stake in the event. They're known as scoreboard whores, because they pay to have their names flashed on the scoreboard for a few seconds before the game: The USF&G Sugar Bowl Welcomes Billy Bob McElroy, VP Marketing, Delta Drilling & Exploration. They tend to be game sponsors, clients of sponsors, friends of sponsors, attorneys of sponsors or politicians hoping to gladhand sponsors. Their conceit that the whole affair is merely an appendage to commerce places them implicitly in the driver's seat. Football cynics identify less with the players than with the coach, whom they view as a fellow man of affairs. Whatever insecurity they feel about being fat and bald instead of lean and hairy they mask by speaking of the players with a forced condescension, regarding them as a less evolved version of themselves.



THROUGHOUT MY OVERLONG AND quite possibly fraudulent attempt at crowd anthropology, my friend remained silent, staring out onto the field, with her chin in her hands. Finally, about five minutes into the game, she said, "I think the key is going to be whether the Miami defense is better than the Alabama offense." She was right. And they weren't. The Crimson Tide quickly pulled ahead. Soon they would be crowned the best college football team in the universe. "Let me tell you something," said the man beside me wearing his lucky undershorts. "I've lived in Alabama for twenty-seven years, I've followed this team for twenty-five years, and I am about to die." That is to say, he was happy. After the game the 40,000 fans who made the pilgrimage to New Orleans stumbled together down to the street, on their way to celebrate in the French Quarter, where they would drink until they became ill. Spirits ran high.

THEN, WITH A SINGLE LINE, THE man beside me on the down ramp of the Dome quashed the triumphal joy. To no one in particular he shouted out, "Yeah. But would you let Copeland and Curry eat at your house?" John Copeland and Eric Curry are Alabama's star defensive ends. Like most of the Alabama players—and unlike most of the Alabama fans—they are black. I turned to get a look at the guy. He was dressed up in shiny loafers, gray flannel slacks and a crimson and white chain-link sweater. He was grinning wickedly. His two finely shod daughters giggled and clutched their father's arms. But the man's bejeweled wife apparently didn't get the joke. "Daddy was saying that no one would have a black man to dinner!" one of the daughter's explained.

STILL, IT WASN'T clear exactly how the man intended his remark. My companion took it at face value: the guy was a straightforward Southern bigot. But I didn't think it was that simple. Taking him for a football cynic, I figured that his target wasn't so much black football players as the white people who had cheered them from the terraces. The football cynic badly needs to keep his distance from the unwashed fans. While they were hog-stomping and boo-raying in the terraces, he was sipping a bourbon and soda in one of the reserved glass-enclosed suites, where he neither saw the game very clearly nor advanced the cause of the Crimson Tide with noise. Now that he was actually out among the masses he was saying to them: "I find your redneck self-identification with the Crimson Tide laughable. You don't even see that it conflicts with your crude lower-class redneck bigotry, which, by the way, I don't share."

AT LEAST, THAT'S HOW I SAW IT. Not everyone in the crowd shared my generous interpretation. A moment after offering his thoughts, the well-heeled man was dwarfed by the shadow of central casting's idea of the Alabama redneck: football double chin, bird's nest beard, triple gut, numbered Alabama jersey. I thought I recognized him from the night before, standing and hooting on the corner near my house. "I'll tell you somethin'," he said to the football cynic, almost gently, as if he were correcting a child who didn't know any better. "They can eat at my table anytime they want. I'll feed both of them at once. You got a problem with that?" Chalk up another victory for the faithful.

MICHAEL LEWIS

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Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

Shakespeare in Calabar

A couple of weeks ago, after one of my columns on how national standards would be an important step toward improving the achievement of all our students, I got a letter from a former Peace Corps Volunteer, Tom Hebert, who is now a consultant in Washington, D.C. He offered, as a case in point, education in West Africa in the 1960s:

> Ask any Peace Corps Volunteer who taught school in West Africa during the sixties about the power of a national curriculum and standards, and we will tell you that the West African School Certificate Examination program, maintained from Cambridge University in England, produced tens of thousands of high school graduates better educated than most of us American Volunteers.
>
> My first year I taught in a poor Moslem high school. Those kids got a tough, hard education that they stood in line for. Need to discipline someone? Ask them to step outside the door, away from the learning. Of course, they knew that in this system, life failure was possible if you flunked exams . . . . But my poor little school, with rough floors, chickens and pigs wandering in and out was famous for its performance in Ping-Pong and the results of the annually published West African School Certificate Examination. We taught to the classical "set curriculum" and helped produce great learners. Wole Soyinka, the 1990 Nobel Laureate for Literature, came out of a school just down the road from ours. No Nobel will come out of my high school in Seattle . . . . Clearly it is time for a national curriculum and standards in this country. It puts *all* schools, teachers and students on an equal footing.

"We taught to the classical 'set curriculum' and helped produce great learners. Wole Soyinka, the 1990 Nobel Laureate for Literature came out of a school just down the road from ours."

According to an article Hebert enclosed, this rigorous education stayed with the people who got it—and gave them pleasure. In "A West African Postcard" (*RPCV Writers and Readers*, November 1992), Hebert describes the 3,000-mile tour made by the University of Ibadan's theatre-on-wheels in honor of Shakespeare's 400th birthday. The program, an enormous hit in villages all over Nigeria, consisted of four hours' worth of scenes from Shakespeare. Hebert, who says that the West Africa of this period contained "the most Shakespeare-literate society the world has known since 16th century London," explains the phenomenon in this way:

> The School Cert mandated, among other standards, that students study five years of Shakespeare to prepare for the final examination's "set play." As a result, for several generations millions of West African kids quite literally memorized two or three of William Shakespeare's plays. (Such heroic learning was much inspired by every Nigerian's lovely use of language and the daily reality of a national life then singularly Elizabethan in the epic grandeur of its debates and tribal intrigues of power and vivid character.) At our performances thousands would mouth the lines in an audible susurrus that confounds me now as I worry over what went wrong with American schools.

The climax of the Shakespeare tour was a performance in Calabar with 3,000 pre-sold seats, which took place before two reigning monarchs:

> . . . the lights came up on a ravishing *Twelfth Night*. But we were now hitting the rainy season. Two hours later, just after the scenes from *Julius Caesar* began, all hell broke loose . . . . The speaker and light towers, rigged on cement-filled wheels, began to weave . . . . Soon the rain was blowing dead level across the footlights. Surely the audience would flee. But looking out we saw them rooted to their chairs . . . . Perhaps the crowd wasn't leaving because the two royal parties hadn't budged. Detailed for the job, I scampered across the field to the royal enclosure. Crouching down by his arm chair, I inquired of the Obong of Calabar, the senior of the two rulers, if he didn't think it best to call the whole thing off, so his people could find some cover. His ear cupped to catch the now unamplified words, he looked up, smiled: "Thank you. I can't leave just yet. I haven't had time to read *Julius Caesar* in so many years. I don't remember now how it all resulted. And I, of course, should know. Remember, how 'Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown.' "
>
> The next morning a heavy-duty tractor was engaged to unstick the stage from the field. The performance had, of course, carried on in the rain to a full, happy stadium.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1992 by Albert Shanker.

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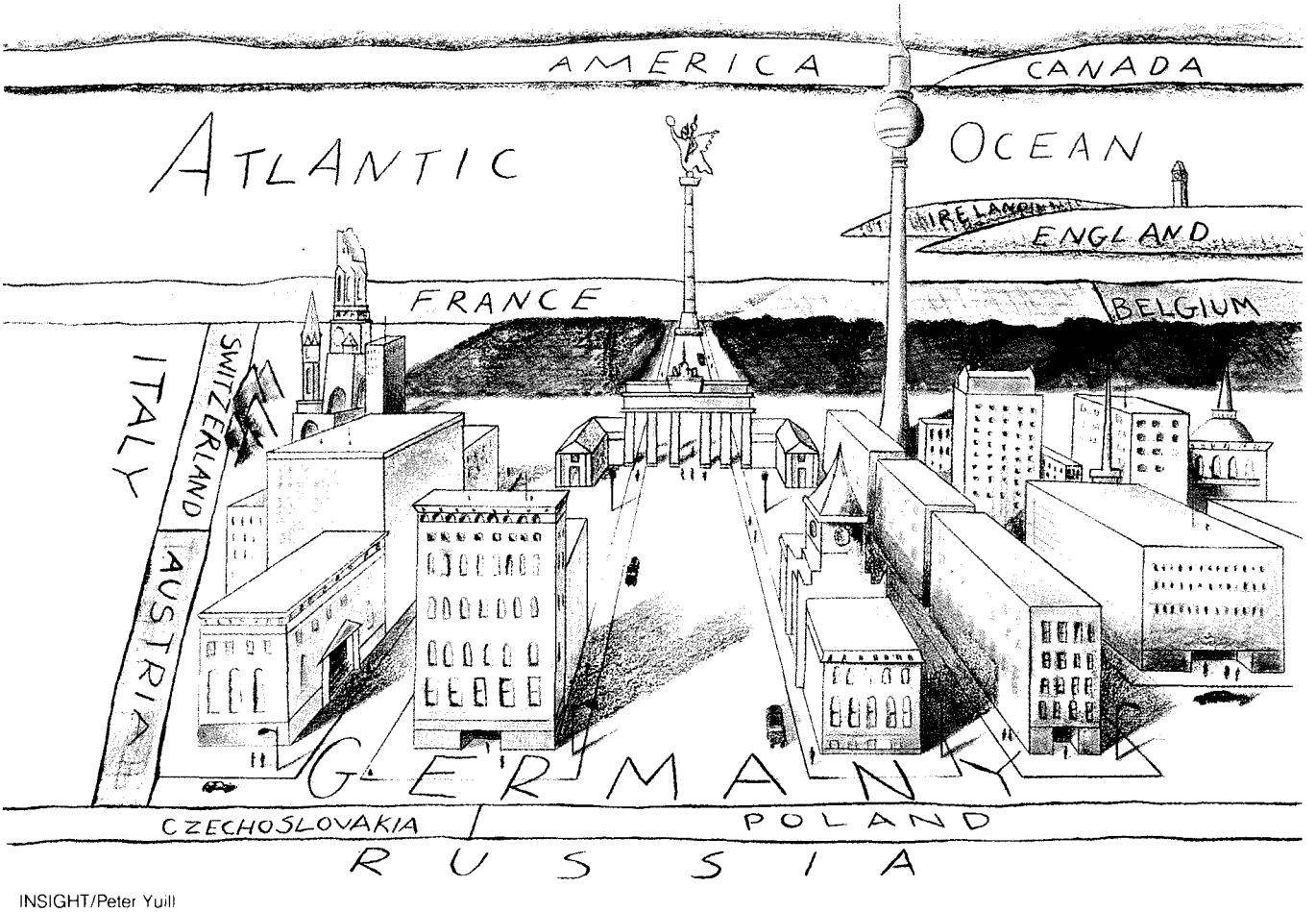

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